Operating Assistance for Public Museums and Visual Arts Organizations

Program Evaluation

Prepared for:
British Columbia Arts Council/
British Columbia Museums Association

July 2005

Catherine C. Cole & Associates
10023 93 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 1W6

Cultural Visions Consulting
262 Overdale Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3J 2G3

2008-05977/

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared under the direction of Jeremy Long, Associate Director of the British Columbia Arts Council, Sue Donaldson, Co-ordinator, Museums and Visual Arts Programs, and Jim Harding, Executive Director of the British Columbia Museums Association. Thanks also to BC Arts Council staff Susan Cameron and Jennifer Collinson and BCMA staff Donna Burr. Interviews were conducted with the following individuals: Glen Alteen, Director, Grunt Gallery, Visible Arts Society/Pacific Assn of Artists; Pierre Arpin, Director, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria; Gordon Goodman, Legacy Initiatives, LegaciesNow (formerly Business Development, BC Olympic and Paralympic Games (Secretariat); Rick Goodacre, Executive Director, BC Heritage Society; George Harris, Curator, Two Rivers Gallery, Prince George; Valerie Hunter, Program Director (Arts and Culture), Vancouver Foundation; Natalie McFarlane, Haida Gwaii Museum of Qay'llnagaay; Jean McIntosh, Director, Alberni Valley Museum; Martin Segger, Director, Maltwood Art Gallery; Pauline Thompson, Director, Vancouver Museum; Pauline Rafferty, Director, Royal British Columbia Museum; Bill Barkley, Consultant/ Former Director Royal British Columbia Museum; who generously shared their expertise and perspectives.

Thanks to all those who took the time from their very busy schedules to respond with such thought and detail to the survey and thanks also to the focus group participants who committed the time, and in some cases at their own expense, to contribute to the lively discussions: Linda Hogarth, Curator/ Education Manager, Campbell River Museum; Elida Peers, Executive Director/Curator, Sooke Region Historical Society; John Harris, Director, Victoria College of Art Society; Rick Duckles, Manager/Curator, BC Forest Museum; Evelyn Gillespie, Comox Valley Art Gallery; Jean McIntosh, Director, Alberni Valley Museum; Greg Evans, Executive Director, Maritime Museum of British Columbia; Deborah Griffiths, Director, Courtenay Museum; Barb Lucas, Finance Officer, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria; Louise Avery, Manager/Curator, Kitimat Museum; Tracy Calogheros, Executive Director, Exploration Place, Prince George; George Harris, Curator, Two Rivers Gallery; Diana French, Museum of the Cariboo; Ellen Corea, Director, Dawson Creek Art Gallery; Julie Fowler, Island Mountain Arts, Wells; Connie Baxter, Supervisor, Museum & Heritage Services, City of Richmond; Roger Boulet, Heritage Services Assistant, Langley Centennial Museum; Ron Denman, Director, Chilliwack Museum & Historical Society; Maurice Guibord, Museum Programmer, Burnaby Village Museum; Robin Inglis, Director, North Vancouver Museum; Allison Mailer, Director of Operations, BC Sports Hall of Fame and Museum; Sue Morhun, Manager, Community and Heritage Services, Langley; Catherine Ouellet-Martin, Delta Museum & Archives; Anna Pappalardo, Assistant Director, Financial Resources, UBC Museum of Anthropology; Debbie Tardiff, Vancouver Maritime Museum Society; Christina Ritchie, Director, Contemporary Art Gallery; Corrine Corry, Director/Curator, Richmond Art Gallery; Chris Wootten, Associate Director, Vancouver Art Gallery; Hank Bull, Executive Director, Centre A, Vancouver International Centre for Contemporary Asian Art; Glenn Alteen, Executive Director, Grunt Gallery, Visible Art Society; Alice Windsor, Langham Cultural Centre, Kaslo; Tom Danyk, Manager, O'Keefe Ranch, Vernon; Wendy Lysak, Manager, Administrative Services, Kamloops Art Gallery; Deborah Proskow, Development Coordinator, Kelowna Art Gallery; Dona Moore, Director, Kelowna Art Gallery; Pamela Burns Resch, Vernon Art Gallery; Portia Priegert, Director, Okanagan Artists Alternative/Alternator Gallery, Kelowna; Wayne Wilson, Kelowna Museums; Randy Manuel, Penticton Museum; Shawn Lamb, Nelson Museum, Archives, Art Gallery & Historical Society; Paul Crawford, Director/Curator, Grand Forks Art Gallery; Robin McDonald, Gallery Vertigo, Vernon; Judith Jurica, Gallery Vertigo, Vernon; Wanda Mizner, Boundary Museum

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 1
Recommendations 2

Introduction 4
Scope of the Evaluation 8

Methodology 10

Program Details 11
Application Process 11
Adjudication Process 11

Findings 13
Degree to Which the Operating Assistance Programs are Achieving their Objectives 13
Extent to Which Current Program Objectives Support the Strategic Priorities of the BC Arts Council 15
Relevance of Current Program Objectives 17
Efficiency and Equity of the Current Adjudication Process and Assessment Criteria 19
Recommended Changes to Current Programs and Processes 22

Appendices 25
I Visual Arts Organizations 25
II Public Museums 26
III Museum and Art Gallery Funding Programs Across Canada 28
IV Survey of Recipients of Operating Assistance Programs 37
Survey of Recipients/Non-recipients of Operating Assistance 53
V Discussion Paper 56
VI Focus Groups 60

Executive Summary

The BC Arts Council provides operating assistance for museums and visual arts organizations through two distinct programs: Operating Assistance for Visual Arts Organizations and Operating Assistance for Public Museums. In 2003/04, the BC Arts Council distributed $1,205,900 to 26 visual arts organizations throughout the province, ranging from the Vancouver Art Gallery, to the Langham Cultural Society and Centre, to the Okanagan Artist's Alternative Association. The second program distributed $1,322,320 to 35 public museums, institutions ranging from the UBC Museum of Anthropology, to the BC Forest Museum, to the Haida Gwaii Museum at Qayillnagaay. This funding represents an average of 6.8% of the operating budgets of visual arts organizations and 7.5% of the operating budgets of public museums.

The ratio of funding provided by the BC Arts Council has declined in recent years, relative to other sources of funding. However, these programs remain extremely important, not just for the funds they provide, but also for the provincial commitment they represent. These operational funds allow organizations to leverage other funding at the municipal and federal levels and from foundations, corporate and private donors. This is the only operating funding available to museums and visual arts organizations provincially. There are a number of other provincially-funded programs available to museums and visual arts organizations that provide project funding. However, project funding requires organizations to constantly apply for funds and to allocate those funds to specific projects, projects which may not be the highest priorities of the organization; it cannot be consistently relied upon.

Funding to the BC Arts Council was reduced in 1996/97 and, with the exception of a one-time payment of $3.6 million to the BC Arts Council in 2000/2001, funding for all the programs of the Council has remained at the reduced level since. Funding provided through these programs is inadequate for current clients and prevents the program from expanding eligibility to include new clients whose inclusion would allow the Council to better meet its strategic objectives. The BC government announced a very welcome increase to the BC Arts Council's annual budget in March 2005 which will result in an increase in funding for museums and visual arts organizations in 2005/2006.

The Operating Assistance for Visual Arts Organizations program is administered directly by the Arts Council and the Operating Assistance for Public Museums program is administered by the British Columbia Museums Association. Although the eligibility and criteria differ for each program, they are currently adjudicated by the same Advisory Committee.

This evaluation was undertaken to assess the degree to which the programs are achieving their objectives; the extent to which program objectives support the existing and proposed strategic priorities of the Council as included in the mandate and in the discussion paper; the relevance of program objectives within the contemporary context; the efficiency and equity of the adjudication process and assessment criteria; and recommend changes.

Clients are very appreciative of the funding that they receive through these programs and are, generally speaking satisfied with the way that the programs are managed. However, they suggested a number of improvements and their comments shaped the recommendations below.

Recommendations

The consultants have developed a number of recommendations for the consideration of the BC Arts Council. These recommendations have been grouped according to Funding, Program Structure and Guidelines, and Funding Applications and Adjudication. Some are already being addressed and are mentioned here to reinforce their value; some are relatively straightforward and easy to implement; others require additional funds to be allocated before they can be fully realized:

Funding

- Seek increased funding for the programs in order to support expanded public museum program eligibility, potentially to include industrial heritage, cultural heritage and other single-theme museums with provincial mandates, to enable more visual arts organizations to be eligible, and to increase funding to existing clients.

- Continue to address the current inequity in funding distribution that favours organizations that have long received funding from the BC Arts Council, and develop a more strategic approach to funding.

- Consider establishment of a contingency fund to enable the Council to respond quickly to changes within a client's community context.

- Seek increased funding to allow Program Coordinators to visit all operating funding clients on a rotational basis, at least once in three years, to develop a better understanding of the institutions themselves and the communities they serve.

- Encourage the provincial government to reinstate funding to archives as an essential aspect of community museums.

Program Structure and Guidelines

- Explore the reintroduction of multiyear operational funding.

- Clarify the objectives, priorities and evaluative criteria of each program and introduce measurable objectives.

- Identify which professional standards are being applied.

- Introduce the use of weighted criteria to reduce subjectivity in assessment.

- Continue the practice of having the BCMA administer the Operating Assistance for Public Museums grants, and encourage the Association to contribute its expertise and knowledge of the museum community in the province to inform the process.

- Analyse the financial data provided by museums and visual arts organizations as permitted and share the findings with them to enable them to use this information locally.

Funding Applications and Adjudication

- Establish distinct juries for each of museums and visual arts organizations for the purposes of the operating grants program and retain a joint Museum and Visual Arts Advisory Committee to discuss larger arts and heritage issues.

- Establish a task force of representatives of both museums and visual art organizations to review the revenue and expenses forms and devise a new form that would meet the requirements of the BC Arts Council and be easier to complete. Professional accountants working in museums and visual arts organizations should be invited to participate on this task force.

- Submit applications to the Advisory Committee as they have been written by applicants, without any editing. Reduce currently stated word lengths if necessary to ensure that editing is not required.

- Provide more detailed and constructive written and verbal feedback, positive or negative, to applicants.

- Continue to monitor and streamline the online application process.

- Clarify the requirement for the payment of artists fees.

Introduction

British Columbia's museums and visual arts organizations provide benefits to their immediate communities and to the province and nation. Collectively, they encourage the development of creativity, collect and preserve art and artifacts, and help residents and visitors to understand the character and history of the province, of humanity, life, and human nature through fostering the production of new work, research, exhibition and various types of programming. The British Columbia Arts Council was formed in 1996 to ensure that all British Columbians are able to participate in a healthy arts and cultural community recognized for its excellence, and to support the arts and cultural community allowing it to achieve its creative, social and economic potential.

The BC Arts Council provides operating assistance for this group of clients through two distinct programs: Operating Assistance For Visual Arts Organizations and Operating Assistance For Public Museums. The former is administered directly by the Arts Council and the latter by the British Columbia Museums Association (BCMA) on its behalf under an annual agreement. The BCMA grants coordinator acts quite independently of the Association and the executive director and board are not involved in administrative process. Final decisions concerning all grant allocations are made by the BC Arts Council.

In 2003/04, the first program distributed $1,205,900 to 26 visual arts organizations throughout the province, ranging from the Vancouver Art Gallery, to the Langham Cultural Society and Centre, to the Okanagan Artist's Alternative Association, an average of 6.8% of their operating budgets. The second distributed $1,322,320 to 35 public museums, an average of 7.5% of their operating budgets, institutions ranging from the UBC Museum of Anthropology, to the BC Forest Museum, to the Haida Gwaii Museum at Qayillnagaay.

Total by Region	Northern	Okanagan/ Kootenay	Mainland/ Southwest	Vancouver Island	Central
Visual Art Organizations	$21,600	$289,400	$811,750	$277,200	$19,250
Public Museums	$140,900	$162,370	$578,400	$394,550	$48,300
Total	$162,500	$451,770	$1,390,150	$671,750	$67,550

The ratio of funding provided by the BC Arts Council has declined, relative to other sources of funding. However, this assistance is important to museums and visual arts organizations not only in and of itself, but also as a demonstrated commitment from the provincial government that may be used to leverage support from other levels of government, corporations, foundations and community partners. Although the provincial government currently operates a number of programs that provide project funding, these two programs provide the only operating funding available to museums and visual arts organizations at the provincial level.

The eligibility and assessment criteria are different for each program. Awards to visual arts organizations support "programs and services which engage people in the recognition, understanding and development of the visual arts. They are intended to support programs and services which encompass a range of current artistic, cultural and heritage interests in the

organization's constituency and within a broader contemporary art discourse."[1] The program supports public programs and services, collections, and governance and administration. Eligibility is based upon factors such as: governance structure, artistic and professional standards, funding history, demonstrated financial need and accountability, diversified revenue, year round access, fees paid to living artists, etc. Applicants must complete an application form which includes the program for the current and proposed year, board and staff lists, planning documents, current federal applications, and financial data.

Awards to public museums support "programs and services which engage people in the recognition, understanding, and development of human and natural history and the visual arts, including the diverse cultures of First Peoples and the world." The program supports public programs and services, collections, and governance and administration. Funding priorities include activities which encompass the range of current artistic, cultural, and heritage interests represented in the organization's constituency and First Nations' interests, encourage education and lifelong learning, provide access to collections and services, compensate living artists, explore new forms of expression and delivery, and demonstrate accountability. Eligibility is based upon governance structure, funding information and history, local support, accountability, operations, standards, access, etc.

A number of types of organizations are excluded from the program: aquaria, botanical gardens, zoological gardens, science and technology centres, and industrial heritage sites; organizations dedicated to a temporary exhibit or a single theme; and organizations which qualify for operating assistance under other provincial programs. With few exceptions, only those museums and visual arts organizations that meet the program criteria are allowed to submit an application for operating assistance. For example, although industrial heritage organizations are not eligible for funding, some organizations such as the BC Forest Museum Society are "grandfathered" and do receive funding. The primary reason for this is that the BC Arts Council has inherited the responsibility of funding for these organizations from other departments within the provincial government or from other funding programs no longer offered.

Applications are evaluated by stated criteria including: BC Arts Council priorities, standards, demonstrated ability, significance of previous and proposed activities, opportunities for self-representation of distinct cultures, evaluation, level and consistency of artists' fees, provision of training opportunities, institutional consistency, use of resources, feasibility, etc. Applications include information regarding administration, financing, long-range planning, leadership and programming. Applications to both programs are submitted annually, reviewed by staff and evaluated by the Museums and Visual Arts Advisory Committee according to stated criteria. The committee's recommendations are forwarded to the BC Arts Council for review.

There has been little change over the years in regards to which organizations receive operating assistance funds. Although some organizations have been dropped from the program, these organizations either no longer met the eligibility criteria or no longer had the capacity to successfully fulfil their responsibilities to qualify for the program. Due to 10 years of frozen or reduced allocations to the BC Arts Council, any increase to a client's award or admission of new clients to the operating assistance program could only be achieved through reduction of existing operating client awards.

[1] British Columbia Arts Council. Operating Assistance Guidelines.

In the fall of 1996, the provincial government reduced the BC Arts Council budget by $4 million. This had the impact of reducing the Public Museums Operating Budget from $1.574 million in 1996/97 to $1.32 million in 1997/98. Similarly, the Visual Arts Operating Budget was reduced from $1.59 million in 1996/97 to $1.271 million in 1997/98. To assist the Advisory Committees deal with this reduction, and also to some extent mitigate the impacts of history on the pattern of distribution, the base grants were reduced by 20% across the board and the committees were then asked to rebuild to the available budget levels. In 2000/01, there was a one-time payment of $3.6 million to the BC Arts Council, by which all museums and visual arts operating assistance clients received a 19% one time payment. The BC government announced an increase to the BC Arts Council annual budget in March 2005; the increase in funding for museums and visual arts organizations will be allocated during the 2005/2006 adjudication.

Government spending at all levels has clearly failed to keep pace with substantial growth in the culture sector over the past decade. At the national level, the Canada Council funds public art galleries.[2] The Department of Canadian Heritage within the federal government provides project funding to museums and visual arts organizations through programs such as the Museums Assistance Program (MAP), the Virtual Museum of Canada Investment Program, the Community Memories Program, and Canadian Arts and Heritage Stabilization Program (CAHSP). Capital funding is available through Cultural Spaces Canada.[3]

Community University Research Alliance (CURA) projects, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), have benefited museums and visual arts organizations in British Columbia.[4] For example, the University of Victoria partnered with the BCMA and seventeen BC museums to conduct research and develop exhibitions, catalogues, publications, websites, and other programs. The University mobilised $2.5 million in funding, of which SSHRC provided $920,000. The Kamloops Art Gallery led a five-year research program called *The Cultural Future of Small Cities* which focused on how cultural organizations work together (or fail to work together) in a small city setting. The program received $1 million from SSHRC and matched it with another $1 million in cash and in-kind contributions within the community.

Provincially, program and minor capital project funding is provided to not-for profit organizations (not municipal museums or educational institutions) by BC Gaming through the Direct Access Program Grants.[5] Under 2010 LegaciesNow, the ArtsNow program has recently been established to strengthen and enhance the creative capacity of individuals, organizations and communities throughout the province.[6] Also, the new Spirit of BC Arts Fund will assist arts and cultural organizations to realize creative projects that contribute to the development of arts and culture in

---

[2] Canada Council Funding Programs. http://www.canadacouncil.ca/grants/grant_policies/nq1272445261459375000.htm

[3] Department of Canadian Heritage Funding Programs. http://www.pch.gc.ca/pc-ch/pubs/2005/tdm_e.cfm

[4] Community University Research Alliance Grants. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/web/apply/program_descriptions/cura_e.asp

[5] Direct Access Program. BC Gaming. http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/gaming/grants/dap/index.htm

[6] 2010 LegaciesNow. http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/Content/ArtsNow/ArtsNow%20Home.asp?langid=1

British Columbia.[7] Both of these new programs provide project funding. The province is celebrating its sesquicentennial in 2008, an anniversary which may provide additional funds to cultural organizations, including museums, visual art galleries and organizations that support the preservation and awareness of built heritage and provincial history generally.

With the demise of the BC Heritage Trust, the role of the Heritage Society of BC has grown in importance. The Heritage Legacy Fund, a joint initiative of the Heritage Society of BC and the Land Conservancy, was established two years ago, with an initial contribution of $5 million from the BC government.[8] The fund resides as an advisor-directed endowment fund within the Vancouver Foundation and is administered through the Heritage Legacy Fund of BC Society. The fund recently received an additional infusion of provincial funds and held the first grant run for the Heritage Conservation Program and the Heritage Awareness Program, programs that will provide support to local heritage projects throughout British Columbia intended to conserve or raise awareness of British Columbia's heritage.

Over the past decade, the federal and provincial governments have provided funding to museums and visual arts organizations to digitize collections and to provide increased online access. through a number of different sources. However, it is becoming more difficult to access funds to digitise collections and the work is far from complete. Funding sources such as Canada's Digital Collections are no longer available; Canadian Culture Online has become more difficult for museums and public art galleries to access as federal resources have been targeted towards the Virtual Museum of Canada and Community Memories Programs. These programs are very specific in terms of what, to whom and how funding is provided. Funding previously provided by the BC Arts Council through BC's Digital Collections has been depleted and is no longer available.

Where technology can be funded through project grants, institutions are sometimes able to acquire current hardware, software and equipment. However, it's difficult to finance ongoing maintenance and upgrading operational equipment needs. Public museums and visual art organizations require technology to support collections management and administrative functions as well as the exhibition of new media art. Costs for purchase and replacement of equipment continue to rise. The definition of operating versus capital funding in the BC Arts Council is not clear; clients feel that small capital costs should be eligible under operating funding.

The Vancouver Foundation provides both project and capital funding totalling approximately $1 million per year through the Arts and Culture Committee, and $500,000 from the Education Program.[9] The Foundation recently announced the establishment of the BC Arts Renaissance Fund, a $25 million fund endowed by the provincial government in support of arts and culture organizations in British Columbia.[10] The fund will match donations to endowment programs,

---

[7] Spirit of BC Arts Fund. Ministry of Economic Development. http://www.sbed.gov.bc.ca/2010secretariat/ArtsFund/spirit_of_bc_arts_fund.htm

[8] Heritage Legacy Fund. http://www.islandnet.com/~hsbc

[9] Vancouver Foundation. http://www.vancouverfoundation.bc.ca/GrantInformation/GrantInformation.shtml

[10] BC Arts Renaissance Fund. http://www.vancouverfoundation.bc.ca/GrantInformation/BCRF/BCRF.shtml

allowing organizations to build an endowment from which to draw operating funds. The federal government is currently considering adopting a similar approach under its proposed museums policy.[11]

The Hamber Foundation and The Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation both provide smaller grants to cultural organizations, in the $2,000-$4,000 range; other foundations with a interest in arts and heritage, like the Michael Audain Foundation also fund the visual arts but have a less formal application process.

Scope of the Evaluation

This evaluation was undertaken to:

- Assess the degree to which the programs of the Operating Assistance for Visual Arts Organizations and Public Museums are achieving their objectives.
- Assess the extent to which current program objectives support the strategic priorities of the BC Arts Council.
- Assess the relevance of current program objectives within the contemporary context of museums and visual arts organizations practices.
- Assess the efficiency and equity of the current adjudication process and assessment criteria by which award recommendations are determined.
- Recommend changes to current programs and processes to better achieve program and Arts Council objectives taking into consideration current trends and future priorities of the sector.

Immediately prior to this evaluation taking place, the BC Arts Council engaged in a review of its strategic directions and objectives that resulted in a Discussion Document being posted for comment at the same time that the consultants issued the survey for this study.[12] This resulted in some confusion among clients, particularly those in visual arts organizations. However, this study was not intended to look at the larger questions of the strategic directions and objectives for the BC Arts Council, but was limited to the effectiveness of the current program objectives in supporting existing strategic priorities. The consultants for this study have not been involved in the larger study, nor have they seen the feedback on the Discussion Document.

The Discussion Document proposes strategic priorities for the BC Arts Council:

1. The Council must respond to change through its programs and operating procedures.
2. The Council's activities must reflect the development needs of different geographic, artistic and cultural communities.

Further, the Discussion Document noted that the Council has identified five objectives, to:

- sustain BC's artistic and cultural infrastructure.

---

[11] Canadian Heritage. *Towards a New Museum Policy: Discussion Guide*, 2005. http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/ph/pubs/mus-pol-mus/pdf/guide_e.pdf

[12] British Columbia Arts Council. *Strategic Directions and Proposed Objectives for the BC Arts Council.* Discussion Document, December 2004. http://bcartscouncil.ca/pdf/2004-discussiondoc-final.pdf

- support new and emerging forms of cultural expression;
- respond to the diversity of artistic and cultural practice in British Columbia;
- support new artists and organizations working in established art forms;
- recognize the needs of a geographically diverse population.

The consultants have not developed recommendations based upon the larger questions addressed by funding clients but have included their comments in this review. Feedback received from recipients of operational funding was consistent with the proposed strategic priorities and will inform the ongoing discussion within the BC Arts Council regarding strategic priorities and objectives.

Methodology

The consultants met with representatives of the BC Arts Council and BCMA in November 2004 to review the methodology and schedule, receive background information, discuss the proposed list of key stakeholders to be consulted, and brainstorm about the project. The consultants also met individually with Program Coordinators of the BC Arts Council and BCMA to discuss program objectives and results, organizational priorities, program delivery and the adjudication process.

The consultants reviewed BC Arts Council annual reports (2000-2004); program guidelines and criteria; grant summaries for Visual Arts Organizations (fiscal years ending 1997, 2000, 2004); adjudication reports for Operating Assistance for Public Museums (1996/97 and 2002/2003) and for Visual Arts Organizations (1997, 2000 and 2004); BCMA program coordinator's report (1997/98-2001/02); completed applications from Visual Arts Organizations and Public Museums; and the BC Arts Council Policy and Procedures Manual.

The consultants analysed data on funding recipients held at the BC Arts Council and the BCMA offices. The BC Arts Council maintains a detailed database that is able to generate operating program client data beginning in the fiscal year ending 1995 for Visual Arts Organizations. The database contains operating program client information for Public Museums only for the years 1995-97 and from 2004 onward. The Public Museum data for the years between 1997 and 2004 is held at the BCMA in a separate database.

The consultants reviewed related funding programs provided by other provinces and the federal government and other project funding sources available to museums and visual arts organizations in British Columbia. They also spoke with some funders to get clarification, particularly of new programs.

BC Arts Council staff discussed the project with the Museum and Visual Arts Advisory Committee and the consultants spoke with several present and former committee members, both individually and in focus groups, but was not able to meet with the committee as a whole due to the committee's schedule and workload.

In consultation with the BC Arts Council, the consultants prepared a survey and distributed it to funding recipients. Seventy-two (72) surveys were distributed and twenty-nine (29) surveys completed and returned, a 40% return rate. Survey respondents provided detailed comments that were very helpful in developing recommendations. The consultants prepared an interim report summarising the findings to date and drafted a brief discussion paper. The report and discussion paper were reviewed by BC Arts Council and BCMA staff. Additional information was provided by the BC Arts Council that was incorporated into a revised report.

The consultants facilitated five focus groups with representatives of public museums and visual arts organizations in Vancouver, Victoria, Kelowna and, by teleconference, with organizations from Northern British Columbia. In Vancouver, two focus groups were held, one each for representative of public museums and visual arts organizations; the others were all mixed groups. Non-clients were not included in the survey, but were included in the focus groups. The discussion paper was distributed in advance, and the consultants summarised the survey results at the beginning of each session.

Program Details

Application Process

The deadline for applications is September 30 of each year. An organization may receive only one operating assistance award per year for the current or future year's operations, depending upon application date and the organization's fiscal year. The application form and program guidelines are available on the BC Arts Council and BCMA websites and the form can also now be completed and submitted on-line. Electronic applications are password protected; access is made available to eligible applicants through contacting the BC Arts Council offices. Existing clients receive access instructions, guidelines and application forms in mid-July of each year.

Funding recipients may request further information from either the BCMA Grants Coordinator or the BC Arts Council Coordinator for Visual and Media Arts depending upon the program to which they are applying. Ideally, the coordinators would make site visits on a regular basis. However, limited administrative resources severely hamper such visits. Clients report that coordinators reply via email or telephone to their questions.

All applications are submitted to the BC Arts Council offices. The Public Museum applications are then held for pick-up by the BCMA Grants Coordinator. The coordinators review the applications and prepare them for distribution to the Advisory Committee. They ensure that the organizations meet the eligibility criteria and that the application is complete. Applications are somewhat edited for length and repetition.

The coordinator prepares a brief including a short history, analysis of the applicant's submitted budgets, statistics and financial statements, and also comments on the feasibility of the submission. She might also make comments with regard to the previous year's plans compared to reported activities, the applicant's response to previously expressed Advisory Committee concerns, and changes to the governance or staffing structure of the organization. Support material is made available to Advisory Committee members only at the adjudication meetings.

Adjudication Process

The BC Arts Council encourages community members to nominate individuals to the Advisory Committee. An on-line nomination form is available. Committee members are appointed annually by the Council. There are representatives of both the museum and visual arts communities on the committee, however they are not formally nominated or appointed by the BCMA. The Council considers broad professional knowledge, expertise, geographical representation, gender and diverse aesthetic, institutional and cultural viewpoints when making these appointments. The BC Arts Council Policy and Procedures Manual states terms of reference for Advisory Committee members. It is a comprehensive document that clearly outlines the policies and procedures for all BC Arts Council funding programs, including the operating assistance programs. Within this document are the program guidelines, eligibility criteria, application process and preparation, administration procedures, and payment structure. A member of the BC Arts Council member is assigned to these programs to attend the adjudication and be the spokesperson for the committee, to carry their concerns to the Council.

The Advisory Committee assesses the applications submitted to both operating assistance programs and makes recommendations pertaining to which applications should be supported, as well as the

level of the funding. Although a formal evaluation grid or weighted scale is not used as part of the assessment, evaluation criteria are stated in the program guidelines. The coordinators attend the adjudication session and provide background information as requested by the committee. The coordinators also serve as the scribes for the jury and record comments.

Accepted standard practices for public museums and visual arts organizations are not linked formally to the evaluation of any one application, although Section M of the Public Museums application form and the cover page for the Visual Arts application form request the detailed listing of existing policies and planning documents. These documents inform the application. There is no formal weight given to the existence or quality of these documents during the application assessment process. There has been occasional reallocation of funding based upon previous success or upon the potential of proposed organizational activities for the upcoming year but the funding levels are relatively stable.

The recommendations of the Advisory Committee are prepared by the coordinators and then submitted to the BC Arts Council by the Arts Council representative to the Committee. The BC Arts Council makes the final decisions. Once those decisions are made, the coordinators prepare letters advising the applicants of their success or failure in receiving operational funding. The letter includes brief, summarised comments made by the jury about the application.

Clients are not required to submit a final report. They report on their previous year's award through their current year's application for support. They are required to submit their current year's achievements in relation to their plans as submitted in the previous year and are required to submit externally prepared financial statements for their most recently completed fiscal year. Audits are required for awards over $25,000 and operating budgets over $250,000. Externally prepared financial statements are required for those clients with awards or operating budgets less than the above.

Findings

Sixty-five per-cent of survey respondents ranked the effectiveness of the Operating Assistance program at 3 or more indicating that they are relatively satisfied with the effectiveness of the Programs in meeting their needs. However, 31% of respondents indicate that improvement can be made. Even clients who indicated that they are relatively satisfied had suggestions for improvements. The recommendations below are drawn from comments provided in response to survey questions, as well as input from participants in the focus groups.

Degree to Which the Operating Assistance Programs are Achieving their Objectives

The objectives of both the Operating Assistance for Visual Arts Organizations and the Operating Assistance for Public Museums programs are deliberately broad, so they can be interpreted in a flexible manner. Sixty-two percent of survey respondents (funding recipients) think program priorities align well with those of their organization. On one level, program priorities are very broad: "support of programs and services which engage people in the recognition, understanding, and development of human and natural history and the visual arts, including the diverse cultures of First Peoples and the world" in the case of public museums and "support of programs and services which engage people in the recognition, understanding, and development of the visual arts. Awards are intended to support programs and services which encompass a range of current artistic, cultural and heritage interests represented in the organization's constituency and within a broader contemporary art discourse" in the case of visual arts organizations.

Recommendation
Clarify the objectives, priorities and criteria of each program and introduce measurable objectives.

However, in the minds of focus group participants, the objectives, priorities and eligibility criteria have become tangled. The language is not consistent. For example, the same statement concerning First Peoples is considered a priority under the museums program while it is considered eligibility criteria under the visual arts program. Eligibility criteria is not limited to basic requirements but also includes some grey areas upon which judgements are required (e.g. high standard of professionalism) which would be more suitable under assessment criteria. Clients are not able to clearly state the objectives of the program, nor are they clear on how the objectives are being interpreted.

Recommendation
Clarify the requirement for the payment of artists fees.

Clients support the concept of the payment of artists' fees. However, some are unclear of the definition of an artist and unsure of the amount of payment required. The BC Arts Council has adopted UNESCO's four points defining a professional artist; but this definition is not clear to all clients. The guidelines for Public Museums state: "the compensation of living artists through the payment of fees to artists, and adherence to provisions of the Canadian Copyright Act." The guidelines for Visual Arts Organizations refer specifically to professional artists. Neither stipulates the payment of Canadian Artists Representation/ le Front des artistes canadiennes (CARFAC) rates, however, clients are under the impression that CARFAC rates must be paid. They can not always afford to pay CARFAC rates and would prefer to be able to negotiate individually with artists. Many Canada Council funded galleries currently do so.

CARFAC rates themselves are under discussion; CARFAC recently announced a new fee structure which is not acceptable to Canadian public art galleries. The Canadian Art Museum Directors Organization (CAMDO) and the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) are currently negotiating with CARFAC to establish a more reasonable fee structure.[13] Emerging artists would rather not have exhibitions cancelled because galleries can not afford to pay CARFAC fees. Museums argue that when it is and is not required to pay exhibition fees should be clarified; for example, they should not have to pay artists' fees to exhibit the work of amateur photographers who are members of a local camera club. This is simply an issue of clarification.

Organizations, particularly in smaller centres and rural communities, feel that they understand their local communities and are the best judges of how to consult with the community and engage the community in their work. Some find the Council's review of the relevance of their programs and services to their constituencies to be paternalistic. For example, a large gallery in an urban centre is expected to show the work of professional artists of longstanding; a smaller gallery in a smaller community is expected to relate more directly to its community, to show the work of emerging local artists. These funding programs support the work of professional artists, not amateur community art activities, which are funded through the Community Arts Council Assistance program. It's important to maintain a balance between ensuring visual arts organizations and museums maintain professional standards, and ensuring that organizations that are doing good work in smaller communities are not disqualified for not adhering to standards that are not relevant within their context, or that are not achievable at a particular time.

Museums and visual arts organizations support the involvement of First Nations in their work, however, some organizations are less able than others to demonstrate the required receptivity to the rights to and interests in, the materials and knowledge of both traditional and contemporary cultures of local First Nations in practice because there may not be a resident First Nations community. Similarly, some find it difficult to collaborate with organizations that do not share their vision, mandate and priorities. It may not be possible to partner with First Nations at any given time because they are focused on other priorities. Efforts of organizations in these locations to work with culturally significant minorities should be respected.

The BC Arts Council staff recognize that there is a need to ensure First Nations representation both on the Council and on the Advisory Committee to ensure that the particular needs of First Nations people are heard and understood. This is primarily a concern of the First Peoples' Heritage, Language & Culture Council but was raised as being an important consideration for the BC Arts Council as well.

Cultural tourism is a growing priority for the province, and can be an important marketing approach for some public museums and visual arts organizations, but requires additional funding targeted towards marketing, and tourism and media partnerships, areas not currently eligible for support under this program. Marketing for cultural tourism is not funded through the BCAC but is funded through ArtsPod.

[13] The CMA and CAMDO recently commissioned a study to be used as the basis for an alternative fee schedule during their negotiations with CARFAC. The draft report, *Paying for the Public Exhibition of Artistic Works*, by Abraham Hollander, was submitted in December 2004.

Extent to Which Current Program Objectives Support the Strategic Priorities of the BC Arts Council.

The BC Arts Council has proposed two strategic priorities. Although they have not yet been approved, clients considered both the proposed priorities and those of individual programs.

1. The Council must respond to change through its programs and operating procedures.
2. The Council's activities must reflect the development needs of different geographic, artistic and cultural communities.

In terms of responding to change through its programs and operating procedures, clients see this program evaluation as an opportunity to change the programs themselves as well as the operating procedures and welcome this opportunity. It will be important to demonstrate a commitment to change, as clients mentioned that many of these issues have been raised in the past without any change. The program is not currently as responsive to change, either within the profession or within the province, as it might be if given additional funds.

The mandate of the BC Arts Council is "to provide support for arts and culture in British Columbia; provide persons and organizations with the opportunity to participate in arts and cultural activities; and provide an open, accountable, and neutrally administered process for managing funds for British Columbia arts and culture."[14] Some clients feel that there should be a specific commitment to heritage in the BC Arts Council mandate if the Council remains the body responsible for funding museums. The BC Arts Council should be given the mandate to support the collection, preservation and interpretation of the history of the province if funding to public museums falls under its jurisdiction.

This is the only province in which funding to museums is granted by an arts council. Some of the public museum clients perceive that heritage is a lower priority with the Council than the arts and question the rationale of funding to public museums being placed with the BC Arts Council rather than under a renamed BC Arts and Heritage Council or a parallel BC Heritage Council. The heritage community in the province is currently fractured, with museums as stakeholders for both the Arts Council and BC Heritage.

Council members are primarily either practising artists of various disciplines or representatives of the community at large such as teachers and business leaders. Like public museum stakeholders, representatives of visual arts organizations feel a similar disparity with performing arts organizations, that the emphasis within the Council is upon the performing arts rather than the visual arts. This is a common complaint for arts councils; if asked, literary and media arts organizations might indicate that they felt there was too much weight given to galleries and museums.

Some clients also suggested that funding currently provided to visual arts organizations through BC Gaming might be better distributed through the BC Arts Council, which has a better understanding of their needs. Another suggestion, to allocate the GST from arts and cultural activities to benefit non-profit cultural activity in the province, would demonstrate the relationship between the economic contribution of the arts and the support that the arts receive.

[14] http://www.bcartscouncil.ca/about

The Council's commitment to the development needs of different geographic, artistic and cultural communities is extremely important. The Council must acknowledge that the priorities of individual visual arts organizations and public museums are tied to the history and character of their communities. A number of individuals commented that feedback received from the Council did not reflect the current reality in these institutions, but referred to historical situations that may have already been resolved. In order to truly understand the issues facing visual arts organizations and public museums in remote parts of the province, site visits are crucial. Some individuals excel at grantsmanship and may be able to effectively misrepresent their institutions, something which could be observed through a site visit. The Council should try to establish a schedule whereby each public museum and visual arts organization in the client group would be visited at least once every three years. Unfortunately, resources allocated to program administration have been reduced and it is usually not possible. A specific budget should be requested and allocated towards site visits annually.

Recommendation
Seek additional funding to allow Program Coordinators should visit all operating funding clients on a rotational basis, at least once in three years, to develop a better understanding of the institutions themselves and the communities they serve.

Arts and cultural communities require more provincial support, not just within these programs but within other branches and ministries as well, for the creation of art, for the development of artists and curators, and for cultural activity in schools. There is a difference of opinion about the status of artist-run centres, with one view arguing that artist-run centres relate differently to artists and to their communities and therefore should have a different set of guidelines than visual arts organizations; the other that they should be considered within the broader umbrella of visual arts organizations because they contribute to providing a bigger picture of activity within the sector. Funding to artist-run centres is minimal and the historical bias in the distribution of funding apparent in museums and galleries is also evident with artist-run centres, where funding has not increased with the growth of the sector. Artist-run centres that received funding in the seventies and eighties receive more funding than younger organizations. Some clients suggested that the Council should introduce a program of support for interdisciplinary work; Vancouver is the second largest centre for performance art in Canada but this work is not distinctly supported provincially.

Eighty-six percent of survey respondents (eligible clients) felt that the programs' eligibility criteria were appropriate relative to their own organizations. They felt that eligibility should continue to depend upon artistic excellence, good governance and sound financial management. Fifty-nine percent of respondents felt that the criteria should be expanded to if additional funding were available. Twenty-four percent of respondents had no opinion but, as 52% of respondents were from visual arts organizations, not subject to the thematic restrictions, it's not surprising that they had no opinion.

Recommendation
Seed increased funding for these programs in order to expand public museum program eligibility to include industrial heritage, cultural heritage and single-theme museums with provincial mandates, to enable more visual arts organizations to become eligible, and to provide more funding to existing clients.

In order to reflect the development needs of different cultural communities in the province, the BC Arts Council must be as inclusive as possible in the eligibility criteria for the public museum program. Eligibility should focus on the value of a museum to its community, not on which community it reflects. The geographic definition of community currently used by the BC Arts

Council is too limited. Where a particular cultural community has played an important role in the development of the area (e.g., Doukhoubour), a public museum that interprets the culture and history of that community should not be considered a single-theme museum Similarly, a single-theme museum (e.g., sports) that considers the theme within a provincial context should also be eligible for funding. Within the current program budget, there is not enough funding to expand the eligibility of the program, but the Arts Council should lobby for additional funds specifically to expand the program.

The BC Arts Council does not have a mandate to fund public archives. Currently there is no provincial funding available to archives. Many community museums include archives within their mandates as "knowledge-based collections." Provincial funding to archives has been discontinued. However, some clients think that operating funding should be available for the continued development of archives, either within the BC Arts Council or another provincial heritage funding program.

Recommendation
Encourage the provincial government to reinstate funding to archives as an essential aspect of community museums.

Currently there is no funding available within the BC Arts Council for contingency, support for organizations during a time of crisis, or means to accommodate increases in operating costs that are beyond an organization's control (e.g., increased audit and insurance costs as a result of concerns for public accountability and recent terrorism attacks). The BC Arts Council should establish a contingency fund to allow it to respond quickly to changes within the community.

Recommendation
Consider establishment of a contingency fund to allow the Council to respond quickly to changes within the community.

Relevance of Current Program Objectives

Sixty-two percent of survey respondents indicate that program priorities align with their organizational priorities, and 86% that program eligibility criteria are appropriate in relation to their own organizations. However, respondents and focus group participants raised concerns that current funding decisions are not strategic – funding is primarily historical, rather than making difficult choices to support one organization over another, to initiate support of an organization going in a particular direction, or to not support an organization. Timing was also mentioned as a strategic issue, that the BC Arts Council is not on the cutting edge in terms of visual arts funding but decisions are primarily based upon precedence so it is very difficult to adapt to the contemporary context. The Council is very aware of this inequity and made an effort to reduce it in 1997/98 when all base grants were cut by 20% and the committees instructed to rebuild to the available budget levels. However there continues to be a disparity between the amount of funding received by like institutions depending upon when they came into the program.

Recommendation
Continue to address the current inequity in funding that favours organizations that have long received funding from the BC Arts Council, and develop a more strategic approach to funding.

Sixty percent of the budget allocated to visual arts organizations goes to two galleries – the Art Gallery of Vancouver and the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria – which represents an increase from 55% in 1996/97. The disparity is less obvious for public museums because the province's largest

museum, the Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM) is a crown corporation funded directly rather than through this program. In 1996/97, the three museums that received the largest amounts of funding were the BC Forest Museum, the Vancouver Museum, and the UBC Museum of Anthropology (MOA) at 32%. Cuts to each institution reduced that proportion to 28% of the total, with MOA no longer one of the top three. The Vancouver Maritime Museum, which has increased its funding slightly, now receives more funding than MOA.

The historical bias in the distribution of funding continues to be a bone of contention for BC museums and visual arts organizations. Some regions currently receive very little funding; some clients suggested regional distribution should be one of the funding criteria. Per capita funding has been suggested as an equalization factor but it would only increase regional disparity. Another possibility would be to provide an equal percentage of an institution's operating budget, which would hurt small institutions more than large. Another possibility would be to introduce a zero-based budgeting formula but Advisory Committee members are reluctant to cut operating funding of organizations funded through these programs. This issue will probably not be fully addressed without increased funding.

Organizations can not access operating funding from the BC Arts Council until they have full-time staff; however, many organizations rely upon Council funding to pay the salaries of their full-time staff. They can not hire staff without this funding. Therefore, it's difficult for new organizations, that may be addressing contemporary issues, to become established and to become accepted into the program for the first time.

There is a perception that the BC Arts Council needs to become more strategic in its allocation of funding, either in terms of keeping up with the changing nature of the work of visual arts organizations and museums or in supporting projects in the early stages, enabling them to attract funding from other sources.

There is some question of how effectively the Council is able to balance the needs of visual arts organizations and museums in urban centres versus those in smaller centres and rural communities. The Council has an important role to play in fostering arts and heritage in small communities. The program objectives have not kept pace with changes in BC and should be reviewed. Some clients feel that it is time to reconsider what the province should be supporting in terms of museums and visual arts organizations. There are more institutions in the province, and more still under development, and the question of who does and does not receive funding appears arbitrary to some.

Museums and visual arts organizations within municipal structures, or that are part of another large parent organization, receive technological support from outside the institution that can defray costs both in terms of equipment and expertise, but non-profit organizations are completely on their own.

There are a number of First Nations projects currently being developed in BC. Three examples include: The First Nations Cultural Centre in Whistler being initiated by the Squamish and Lil'wat First Nations, The National Gallery of Aboriginal Art being promoted by the Bill Reid Foundation, and The Desert Heritage Centre in Osoyoos. These organizations may come to the BC Arts Council for funding. At the same time, some First Nations projects are no longer eligible for funding, for example, Kwagiulth Museum and Cultural Centre at Cape Mudge on Quadra Island (which closed due to internal issues) and the Secwepemc Museum & Heritage Park in Kamloops (which ceased operations as a museum and eliminated curatorial staff).

The growth in the number of First Nations initiatives is having multiple impacts on existing public museums in the province. Museums are providing advice and expertise to assist First Nations communities in developing their own museums. In some cases, they are reassessing their own collections and practice in an effort to respond to requests from First Nations.

First Nations museums and cultural centres are eligible for funding from a number of different federal government sources that are not available to other museums. They tend to use the words cultural centre, rather than museum or art gallery, because, although they share similar mandates, the concept of a cultural centre is more holistic and can incorporate specific objectives such as language preservation.

There are specific capacity issues in First Nations communities. Existing training programs are not always effective for First Nations people, particularly those who are unable or unwilling to travel to participate in workshops or courses. The kinds of training required is specific and not always covered in existing museology programs. Approaches that incorporate apprenticeship and mentoring can be more effective in developing the necessary skills within a community. There needs to be an ongoing commitment to capacity building within First Nations. While more directly the mandate of the First Peoples' Heritage Language and Cultural Council, the BC Arts Council is also concerned with supporting First Peoples.

Efficiency and Equity of the Current Adjudication Process and Assessment Criteria

Although this is operational funding, the stated emphasis is on public programs and outreach services, collection, governance and administration rather than operations. Some clients feel that the program should focus on an organization's operation and viability. The weight given to behind-the-scenes activities should be more equal to that given to programming. The adjudication process is currently not perceived to be transparent by some clients.

That the two sets of funding applications are currently approached differently is not perceived to be a problem, and by some it is considered an advantage. However, difficulties arise when requirements that are professional norms within one discipline are applied to the other. The forms themselves appear to some clients to have been adopted from a performing arts model and bear little relation to the realities of working within visual arts organizations let alone public museums.

Recommendation

Continue the practice of having the BCMA administer the Operating Assistance for Public Museums grants, and encourage the Association to contribute its expertise and knowledge of the museum community in the province to the process.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to the BCMA administration of the grants to public museums, and some confusion about the role played by the BCMA. The relationship between the BCMA and the BC Arts Council should be clearly stated. Some clients think that the relationship is inappropriate because the BCMA is a service organization and should not be evaluating its members. However, the BCMA does not evaluate its members; it simply administers the application process. Museum clients feel that the knowledge and understanding of the program coordinator concerning the inner workings of either museums or visual arts organizations is more important than whether the individual is based within the BC Arts Council or the BCMA. There is an impression to some that having the BCMA administer grants to museums gives the program

more legitimacy in the museum community. Given the independence of the BCMA Grants Coordinator, the value may be more symbolic than real, but the BCMA's role makes the process seem more transparent. It may be equally effective to have the program administered solely by the BC Arts Council but the perception of the program in the community would change. The question of whether the funding could be transferred to BC Heritage to be administered by a branch of the government more sympathetic to heritage issues than is the BC Arts Council was also raised.

Clients would like to see the program coordinators become their advocates. They think that the program coordinators should get to know the clients through ongoing communication and periodic sites visits, review the applications to ensure that the clients have completed them as accurately and completely as possible, and speak on behalf of the organization during the adjudication process. They would like the coordinators to argue in favour of each application as it is discussed.

There is a difference of opinion about whether or not applications should be adjudicated by the same committee. Sixty-six percent of survey respondents indicate that the current structure for the advisory committee is appropriate. In their comments, some find the different approaches interesting and informative, others that the differences between the two types of organizations are too great. It is a lot of work for Advisory Committee members reviewing the applications of both visual arts organizations and museums simply because of the numbers, and would be less work if they were only dealing with one discipline. It might then be possible for committee members to review support material prior to the evaluation, rather than having to rely wholly on the assessment of the program coordinators.

Some clients suggested there are advantages to having applications adjudicated by the same committee. For example, applications in the discipline that are not one's speciality are less self-evident to Advisory Committee members so they ask different questions and provide more objective insights. Review by a combined committee provides a larger picture, both for the BC Arts Council and for committee members themselves as a form of professional development. Some clients feel that as long as the grants are provided through the BC Arts Council, there should be a joint advisory. There are some ways in which curatorial practice in art galleries and museums borrow from one another. The similarities between museums and art galleries are greater than the differences, particularly in First Nations communities (which have a more holistic approach) and small communities (in which the institutional mandate may incorporate both art and history).

However, the spectrum of organizations being adjudicated is wide and it's a challenge to evaluate organizations whose practice is unfamiliar, particularly for those at either end of the spectrum: for public museum representatives to evaluate the work of artist-run centres and vice versa. The option of having sub-committees of the larger advisory committee to deal with applications that were clearly one or the other and having a larger committee look at those that blurred the disciplines was also discussed.

Recommendation
Establish distinct juries for museums and visual arts organizations to evaluate operating program funding applications but retain the Museum and Visual Arts Advisory Committee to discuss larger arts and heritage issues.

In most provinces, grants to museums and to visual arts organizations are funded separately and adjudicated separately, museums through provincial departments of culture or museums associations and visual arts organizations through arts councils. British Columbia is the only province in which

the arts council allocates funding to museums. Some arts councils, for example, Manitoba and Saskatchewan include adjudicators from outside the province on their juries to provide a different perspective; it was suggested that this might be a good innovation for the BC Arts Council.

Sixty-nine percent of survey respondents find the assessment criteria relevant. Some clients feel that standards are adequately addressed currently, others that the Council should take the notion of standards further. They are frustrated that improved performance does not lead to increased funding, and that the amount of funding received has not increased even though overall institutional budgets have increased. Both programs refer vaguely to standards under both eligibility criteria and assessment criteria. However, there is no formal evaluation grid and no endorsement of a specific set of standards. Concern was expressed that without an evaluation grid, it is possible for an offhand remark, or a trendy issue, to dominate the assessment inappropriately.

Recommendation
Identify which professional standards are being applied.

Recommendation
Introduce the use of a formal evaluation grid to reduce subjectivity in assessment.

It was noted that public museums and visual arts organizations can have different professional expectations and some professional standards are more relevant to large urban museums and galleries than to smaller, rural museums and galleries, First Peoples museums, or artist-run centres. If funding were more directly linked to adherence to professional standards, how those standards were defined, and whether or not the same expectations applied to all institutions would be important.

The BCMA has a document titled *Standards for B.C. Museums* (c1992). These standards have not been adopted by the museum community and the association recognises that their standards are out-of-date and difficult to use and has received funding through CAHSP to create a series of "Best Practices Modules", some of which will soon be available online on the BCMA's new website in 2005 and others will be added in the summer of 2006. However, these modules will not replace approved standards.

Organizations in small centres and rural communities are concerned about the emphasis upon professional standards and artistic achievement, both in single purpose organizations and in situations where one organization serves as a public art gallery, museum and archives; museums and galleries that have raised their professional standards do not feel that these accomplishments are rewarded through the program. Some thought that the Langham Culture Society & Centre, for example, should not be held to the same standards as the Two Rivers Gallery or the Vancouver Art Gallery. The resources available to each institution, and the needs of their audiences are different. Institutions should be evaluated by situational standards, and by the improvement made from one year to the next. The funding program needs to maintain the flexibility to consider the context in which a museum or art gallery operates.

Clients are currently not satisfied with the feedback that they receive; 31% of survey respondents ranked feedback as a 1 or a 2 (not very valuable), 24% ranked feedback as a 3 (average), and only 28% ranked their feedback as 4-5 (very valuable). Executive directors with established professional relationships with BC Arts Council staff feel more

Recommendation
Provide more detailed and constructive written and verbal feedback, positive or negative, to applicants.

at ease calling to request clarification than do new executive directors. They feel they have to read between the lines of what is being said and that feedback ranges from inadequate, to inaccurate, to paternalistic. Respondents said that they received letters saying, "The [advisory] noted…" is not very helpful; clients are not always sure if the comment is meant to be positive or negative. In extreme cases, clients noted that they had received feedback that pointed out the need to address situations that may have been resolved without recognition of the project coordinator that appeared to relate to a different organization. Whether feedback is positive or negative, more detail should be provided.

Where positive feedback is given, and there is no room for financial rewards, focus group participants questioned whether there might be other forms of acknowledgement that would be valued by organizations. Positive feedback may be used by organizations to leverage funding and support municipally and to reassure boards that improvements are being recognised. Suggestions such as access to specific expertise from within government, such as marketing, have financial implications.

Recommended Changes to Current Programs and Processes

> **Recommendation**
> Explore the reintroduction of multiyear operational funding.

The question of whether or not to reintroduce multiyear funding was discussed but no clear consensus reached. While clients would prefer not to have to apply for funding each year, they do not want to be locked into a funding level. If additional funds were available to the program, organizations would want to be able to access them; if issues raised in a negative evaluation were addressed, they would want to be able to submit an appeal after the first year. On the other hand, clients noted that there is so little change in funding from year to year anyway, it would not make much difference in terms of amounts, and multiyear funding would provide a firmer base from which to approach foundations and corporate sponsors. If multiyear funding were introduced, they felt that it should be two-year, rather than three. Bingo funding is three-year funding, and ironically gambling has become the most stable funding base for some organizations.

> **Recommendation**
> Submit applications to the Advisory Committee as they have been written by applicants, without any editing. Reduce currently stated word lengths if necessary to ensure that editing is not required.

Clients have a number of concerns about the application process. The program coordinator edits applications before they are reviewed by the Advisory Committee. Even with the use of the online application form, narrative responses to application questions are currently being edited for length and repetition. The applications for funding under the Operating Assistance for Public Museums program, in particular, tend to be very long. However, clients are concerned that the meaning of their statements may be inadvertently changed through this process. Some clients would consider a practice of cutting off run-on statements to be more fair than that of editing. Through the online application form, word limits may be set and no additional words accepted. The BC Arts Council should review the stated word lengths and reduce the allowable length to a total that would be given to the Advisory Committee without editing.

Although 72% of survey respondents indicate that the application form are clear and easy to complete, they qualify that statement by saying that they are easy to complete once they learn how to

do so. Many reported problems with revenue and expense table specifically. The form does not correspond to the way museums and visual arts organizations budget internally. The form has been developed to allow the BC Arts Council to compare data received across disciplines. However, it could be asked whether it is more important that the information be comparable across disciplines or that it be consistent within each discipline.

Clients indicated that they are not currently reporting data in the same way from one year to the next. Some clients do not understand the way in which financial information is to be reported and do not remember from one year to the next how they interpreted the financial requirements; a few have developed templates to ensure that they do report the same way from one year to the next. In cases where there is staff turnover, new staff do not understand how previous staff completed the form. Financial reporting requirements have not evolved with the evolution of practice within these organizations. The completion of the financial data takes days (some said weeks) of time and even those organizations with professional accountants on their boards or staff struggle with the forms. Clients question why the application form is so complicated, particularly given that there is not much opportunity to increase funding, nor a serious threat of a reduction in funding.

Recommendation
Establish a task force of representatives of both museums and visual art organizations to review the revenue and expenses forms and devise a new form that would meet the requirements of the BC Arts Council and be easier to complete. Professional accountants working in museums and visual arts organizations should be invited to participate on this task force.

Clients mentioned that reporting for some provincially funded project grants was less onerous and that it would be helpful if requirements at least at the provincial level could be standardised. Museums and visual arts organizations currently have to report the same kind of financial information in different formats for each funder as well as for organizations such as the *Council for Business and the Arts in Canada* that are doing surveys related to cultural funding. It would be very helpful to these organizations if the data collected by the BC Arts Council could be analysed and returned to the museums for education and advocacy purposes.

Recommendation
Analyse the financial data provided by museums and visual arts organizations as permitted and share the findings with them to enable them to use this information locally.

Completing the forms on line should simplify the process and ensure objectivity, but clients have found that the online application forms are extremely difficult to complete. Applicants mentioned problems as diverse as information being lost to information not being accessible for other purposes after the application was submitted. Applications should be retained from one year to the next so that applicants need only update information as required.

Recommendation
Continue to monitor and streamline the online application process.

Appendices

I Visual Arts Organizations	1996/97 Operating			2003/04 Operating			1996/97 – 2003/04
	Budget	Grant	% of Budget	Budget	Grant	% of Budget	% change +/-
Art Gallery of Greater Victoria	1,620,300	247,500	15	2,057,400	215,000	10	-13
Art Gallery of the South Okanagan	215,175	36,250	17	251,455	29,000	12	-2
BC Photography and Media Arts Society	376,308	47,000	12	558,951	50,000	9	6
Burnaby Art Gallery (closed)	556,920	49,000	9				
Campbell River and District Public Art Gallery	119,654	10,000	8	206,876	8,250	4	-17
Canadian Craft Museum Association (closed)	326,785	38,000	12				
Comox Valley Art Gallery (formerly Central Island Arts Alliance)	223,370	19,000	9	343,732	12,750	4	-33
Contemporary Art Gallery Society of BC	286,149	33,500	12	600,490	34,000	7	1
Grand Forks Art Gallery	76,050	13,500	18	130,950	14,200	11	5
I.E. Artspeak Gallery Society/ Artist-run Centre	194,814	24,000		215,300	18,000	8	-25
Kamloops Art Gallery	750,442	65,000	9	1,202,600	70,100	6	8
Kelowna Art Gallery	640,090	26,000	4	722,542	21,300	3	-18
Kootenay Gallery of Art, History and Science	122.750	14,000	11	114,700	12,250	11	-13
Langham Cultural Society & Centre	52,000	9,000	17	44,600	7,000	16	-32
Malaspina Printmakers Society	125,000	12,500	1	194,200	9,500	5	-24
Nanaimo Art Gallery Society	226,300	15,000	7	428,388	12,900	3	-24
Okanagan Artist's Alternative Association/ Artist-run Centre	67,581	8,000	12	171,800	10,600	6	33
Open Space Arts Society/Artist-run Centre	140,687	33,000	23	292,300	28,300	9	-14
OR Gallery Society	95,000	9,000	9	164,175	11,000	7	22
Pitt International Galleries/Artist-run Centre	85,250	12,000	14	79,781	7,000	9	-42
Prince George Art Gallery Association		24,000		777,637	21,600	3	-10
Richmond Art Gallery Association	321,400	18,000	6	383,395	19,450	5	8
South Peace Art Gallery	165,500	9,000	5				
Surrey Art Gallery	605,261	47,500	8	817,990	40,700	5	-14
Vancouver Access Artist-run Centre (new 2003-04)				82,100	6,000	7	
Vancouver Art Gallery Association	6,222,700	590,000	9	10,212,750	512,300	5	-13
Vancouver Intn'l Centre for Contemporary Asian Art (new 2003-04)				235,800	8,000	3	
Vernon Public Art Gallery Society	305,700	18,000	6	307,661	16,400	5	-9
Visible Art Society/Artist-run Centre (1996)	109,000	10,000	9	257,200	10,300	4	3
TOTAL FUNDS AWARDED		**1,519,533**			**1,205,900**		**-21**

II Public Museums	1996/97 Operating			2003/04 Operating			1996/97 – 2003/04
	Budget	Grant	% of Budget	Budget	Grant	% of Budget	% change +/-
Alberni Valley Museum Assoc.	288,200	50,000	17	415,075	50,000	12	0
BC Forest Museum Society/ Industrial Museums	679,000	215,000	32	723,000	153,000	21	-29
Boundary Museum Society	134,800	8,500	6	119,045	8,820	7	4
Britannia Beach Historical Society	565,000	46,500	8	575,000	38,700	7	-27
Bulkley Valley Historical & Museum Society	66,067	9,250	14	76,340	12,000	16	30
Burnaby Village Museum/ Industrial Museums	2,097,620	88,000	4	1,834,110	40,000	2	-55
Campbell River & District Museum & Archives	830,090	60,000	7	442,304	60,000	14	0
Chilliwack Museum & Historical Society	279,501	25,000	9	275,820	20,500	7	-18
Courteney & District Historical Society	352,800	25,000	7	402,500	22,500	6	-10
Cranbrook Archives, Museum & Landmark Foundation/ Industrial Museum	498,000	32,500	7	655,572	40,000	6	23
Delta Museum & Archives Society	420,525	15,000	4	376,514	12,850	3	-14
Fraser-Fort George Regional Museum Society	1,130,140	35,000	3	1,230,000	45,000	4	29
Greater Vernon Museum & Archives	293,785	23,500	8	288,890	20,200	7	-14
Haida Gwaii Museum at Qayllnagaay	264,050	27,500	10	208,500	30,000	14	9
Irving House Historic Centre	321,038	20,000	6	480,328	16,000	3	-20
Kamloops Museum Association	395,610	15,000	4	533,787	15,000	3	0
Kelowna Museum Association	538,320	67,500	13	755,350	55,000	7	-19
Kitimat Centennial Museum Association	223,167	17,000	8	215,380	14,600	7	-14
'Ksan Association		10,500		233,450	9,300	4	-12
Langley Centennial Museum & National Exhibition Centre	464,035	33,460	7	565,710	29,700	5	-11
Maritime Museum of BC/ Industrial Museum	384,750	60,000	16	388,750	51,450	13	-14
Matsqui-Sumas-Abbotsford Museum Society	342,384	28,500	8	287,350	24,500	9	-14
Museum of Northern BC	643,124	40,000	6		30,000		
Nanaimo & District Museum Society	329,438	21,500	7	350,200	18,400	5	-14
Nelson & District Museum, Galley, Archives & Historical Society (formerly the Kootenay Museum Association & Historic Society)		9,000		171,828	8,300	5	
North Peace Historical Society	103,200	9,500	9				
North Vancouver Museum & Archives	529,450	17,000	3	705,454	17,500	2	3
Nuyumbalees Society	271,000	12,000	4				
O'Keefe Ranch & Interior Heritage Society/ Industrial Museum	332,400	49,000	15	449,500	50,000	11	2
R.N. Atkinson Museum & Archives	252,100	7,000	3	179,617	6,150	3	-12
Richmond Museum	267,824	26,000	10	239,907	15,000	6	-42
Salmon Arm Museum & Heritage Society (2003-04)					5,000		
Secwepemc Cultural Education Society	227,500	11,000	5	122,000			

Sooke Region Museum	321,500	32,000	10	285,500	23,000	8	-28
Surrey Museum & Archives	664,000	31,500	5	843,100	28,500	3	-10
U'Mista Cultural Society	449,192	30,000	7	252,000	38,200	15	27
UBC Museum of Anthropology (1996/97)	1,827,911	70,000	4	2,427,909	65,000	3	
Vancouver Maritime Museum Society/ Industrial Museum	803,000	85,000	11	1,056,844	85,250	8	.3
Vancouver Museum Commission	1,208,465	190,000	16	1,422,000	154,800	11	-19
West Vancouver Museum & Archives (1997/98)	175,400	10,000	6	205,042	7,600	4	-24
TOTAL FUNDS AWARDED		**1,615,210**			**1,322,320**		**-18**

III Museum and Art Gallery Funding Programs Across Canada

Overview of Funding Approaches

A selection of museum funding programs from the following provinces and territories was reviewed: Yukon, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland. Arts Council funding programs were reviewed from these following provinces: Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia. The information collected can be found in the summarizing charts following this introduction.

In general, the museum funding programs reviewed indicated two distinct funding approaches:

1. a general or comprehensive operating grant program; and
2. a project grant program.

The general or comprehensive funding program assesses all aspects of the museum's operation and awards funds based upon this assessment. This approach is taken in Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Manitoba. This approach takes into account the entire operation of a museum or art gallery and can trace its progress from year to year through final reports, annual reports, etc.

The project approach awards funds to museums based upon the merits of a particular project that meets the program's criteria. This approach is taken in Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and the Yukon. All the Arts Councils reviewed have project funding programs in place, either as part of the operating funding program or as a separate program. Project grants focus on specific projects so the overall successful operation of a museum is not taken into consideration, just the merits of a particular project. Although this approach can lead to specific advancements in one area of museum function, it does not address the overall success of a museum or art gallery from year to year. It also does not provide any financial stability to the organization, and leads to multiple applications having to be prepared.

For the museum funding programs, funding appears to be linked to standards or overall stewardship, in other words, the ability of the museum to fulfil its mandate. Evidence of this can be seen specifically in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Nova Scotia. Quebec, while not included in the following chart, also links funding to standards and a peer assessment process. The Yukon is currently reviewing its heritage policy for the territory and this new approach will also place greater importance on standards.

Applications are assessed by a jury process in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and, to a lesser extent, Nova Scotia where there is a small assessment team. Ministry staff is solely responsible for the assessment of applications in the Yukon, Ontario, and Newfoundland and Labrador although each province has a set of criteria and a formal weighting scale by which to assess the applications.

Arts Council funding sees similar trends and approaches as in museum funding. All reviewed programs assess the applications through some level of peer assessment, although the amount of individual grants is primarily determined by the amount of funding available and the number of applications received. Only Saskatchewan directly links standards to successful allocation of funds. Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan report the availability of multiyear operational funding.

Province	Newfoundland and Labrador: Grants to Community Museums and Archives	Nova Scotia: Community Museum Assistance Program	Ontario: Museum Operating Grants
Program Administrator	Ministry of Culture	Nova Scotia Museum on behalf of Nova Scotia Tourism & Culture	Ministry of Culture
Program Objectives	Heritage grants are provided to museums, archives, historical societies and historic trusts to assist them to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador.	Currently supports 66 museums offering programs, exhibits, information and interpretation of their collections to community residents and visitors.	Grant recognizes the importance of the community museum through: • Preservation and presentation of its collecti and role it serves in the cultural life of a community. • Fundamental commitment to preservation and presentation of material culture; provinci assistance augments the solid base of support provided by the local community • Promotion of excellence in every aspect of museum's operation.
Accepted Expenses	Expenses related to the operation of community museums. No capital expenses.	Expenses related to the operation of community museums. No capital expenses.	Expenses related to the operation of community museums. No capital expenses.
Maximum Amount Available	The Heritage Grants budget of $85,800 is divided among all eligible groups who apply for a grant. However, not all groups receive the same level of funding.	Grant does not exceed 50% of the operating costs of the museum. Operating costs are deemed to be total cost less any funding received from other provincial or federal government sources.	Depends on the total funds available in the program and museum's achievement of standards.
Funding Formula	Applications are weighted based on a set of criteria. Funding is directly linked to the weighted score, the number of applications received, and the available funds.	Funds available to the program are divided among all eligible museums with grants determined by a museum's financial contribution, its points score, and the number of weeks it is open.	Eligible operating expenses do not include an grants/funds received from federal or provincial sources. Seasonal museums receive maximum of 50% of their eligible operating expenses. For museums that are open year around, the percentage is applied on a sliding scale – the higher the eligible operating costs, the smaller the percentage available. Few museums receive their full eligible amount du to limited funds in the program.
Eligibility Criteria	General requirements regarding public governance, plus: • Be active members of the Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (MANL) or the Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives (ANLA). This condition	General requirements regarding public governance, plus: • Be registered as a charitable institution • Be open for at least two years • Offer programs for schools • The Board of Governors of the Nova Scotia	General requirements regarding public governance, plus: • Museums that are only open on request are not eligible. • Approximately 200 museums receive this funding.

Province	Newfoundland and Labrador: Grants to Community Museums and Archives	Nova Scotia: Community Museum Assistance Program	Ontario: Museum Operating Grants
	does not apply to province-wide organizations. • Have as their primary purpose the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of the province. Eligible groups will normally be limited to museums, archives, historical societies and historic trusts.	Museum must deem each museum eligible. • Museums that are only open on request are not eligible.	
Application Process	Annual application; must include a project outline.	Each eligible museum must undergo a two-part assessment including: • An onsite evaluation conducted every 3 years • The onsite evaluation applies a point system. • The score received evaluation remains in effect until the next evaluation.	Annual application outlining how the standar are being met.
Adjudication Process	Ministry staff.	An evaluation team consisting of one Nova Scotia Museum staff member and two representatives of the museum community.	Ministry staff.
Adjudication Criteria	Weighted criteria include: rent/maintenance of building; utilities; office operations; collections/ conservation; research conducted; provision of accessibility to heritage resources through exhibits and programs; province-wide delivery of heritage programs	Evaluation points awarded based upon standards developed by the Federation of Nova Scotian Heritage in the following areas: collections and access to information; community; facility; governance; interpretation; management; marketing; and retail.	Client museums are required to meet the criteria established in Regulation 877, "Grant for Museums," under the Ontario Heritage A and the Ministry of Culture's "Standards for Community Museums in Ontario."
Other Sources of Grants	**Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador** provides funding for the preservation of heritage structures.	**The Strategic Development Initiative (SDI)** encourages "partners-in-heritage" to develop projects that build on a community's assets and strengths. SDI is a $200,000 initiative aimed at archives, community museums, municipal governments, not-for-profit groups, regional development authorities, and other bodies that are exploring common heritage objectives. Priority is given to initiatives focused on increased self-sufficiency in the province's growing heritage sector.	**Heritage Support Grant program** - 13 umbrella organizations receive funding to deliver programs and services that promote wide public access to Ontario's heritage and encourage public participation in heritage conservation activities. **The Government of Ontario's Cultural Attractions Fund** (CAF) is a $20 million investment fund to support the tourism potential of special events, exhibitions or performance programs mounted by arts, heritage and cultural organizations.
Grant Follow-up	A final report must be submitted with the next year's application.	Participation evaluated every 3 years. The Nova Scotia Museum provides advisory services directly linked to the grant program.	Grant program is monitored to identify improvements/achievements in the museum community as a whole.

Province	Manitoba: Community Museum Grant Heritage Grants Program	Saskatchewan: Museum Grant Program	Alberta: Special Projects Grants Program	Yukon: Yukon Historic Resources Fund
Program Administrator	Dept of Culture, Heritage & Tourism	Museums Association of Saskatchewan	Museums Alberta (funds provided from Alberta Lotteries through AHRF)	Heritage Resources Unit – Tourism & Culture, Yukon Government
Program Objectives	Provides support for facilities that protect & interpret Manitoba's heritage resources to: • Improve quality of museums' collections and programs. • Encourage and support a balanced interpretation of Manitoba's heritage. • Strengthen community identity. • Facilitate effective use of resources through co-operation between Manitoba's museums and related institutions.	To support and promote advancement towards operational excellence in Saskatchewan museums.	To promote the improvement of the standard of museum practice, through: • Improve capability of museums to handle and care for collections. • Stimulate development of exhibits, public programs and research that centre on a museum's statement of purpose. • Enhance museum's services to its public and its image within the community. • Improve skills / qualifications of museum workers.	To promote appreciation, protection, preservation and development, and study and interpretation of historic resources.
Accepted Expenses	Expenses related to the operation of community museums. No capital expenses.	Expenses related to the operation of community museums. No capital expenses.	Project grants are available for: museum administration, collections management, bookshelf (reference materials), exhibitions, public programming, research, training. No capital expenses.	Projects considered include: archaeology, palaeontology, museums and First Nations Cultural Centres, historic sites, native language preservation, toponymy, and historical research. Core programs and operation & maintenance are not eligible.
Maximum Amount Available	Level I Museums – up to $1,350 Level II Museums – up to $3,150	Grants range from $0 to $29,000 depending on the funds available to the program.	$150 to $5,000 depending on the project grant, available 4 times per year.	$10,000 to a 50% maximum of project costs; 80% payable upon project approval with 20% held back until project is completed.
Funding Formula	Level I Museums – up to 90% of locally raised funds (if the museum raises $1,000 then it can receive a maximum of $900) Level II Museums – same 90% formula, up to 45% of operating	Questions on applications are awarded points, which are translated to dollars. Generally, higher scores are awarded more dollars. All funds allocated to the program must be distributed, funds	Strong emphasis on cost sharing with the museum and its community. Special Project Grants cannot be the sole source of funding. Suggested cost sharing – museum 25%, community 25%,	*See above

Province	Manitoba: Community Museum Grant Heritage Grants Program	Saskatchewan: Museum Grant Program	Alberta: Special Projects Grants Program	Yukon: Yukon Historic Resources Fund
	expenses.	cannot be carried over from year to year.	Museums Alberta 50%.	
Eligibility Criteria	General requirements regarding public governance, plus: Level I Museums: must be open a minimum of 30 days and not less than 120 hours each year. Level II Museums: Must be open a minimum of 60 days and not less than 240 hours and have submitted approved policies (statement of purpose, collections management, cataloguing/registration, deaccessioning and conservation). Museums which are only open upon request are not eligible, nor are institutions receiving operating funds directly or indirectly under other grant programs of the Manitoba Government.	General requirements regarding public governance, plus: • Must be a member of the MAS • Some museums are deemed ineligible primarily on the basis of their funding sources.	General requirements regarding public governance, plus: • Must be a member of Museums Alberta • Demonstrate that the institution is committed to promoting standards of excellence.	Private citizens, groups including societies and businesses and First Nations. Capital costs including honoraria, professional fees and short-term wages are eligible. Equipment such as computers and cameras may be considered if justified.
Application Process	Annual application including: last financial statement, all grants received listed individually, budget forecast for operating year, and annual report of activities using department guidelines for content.	Annual application detailing: • Current status of institution • Progress in achieving standard practices • Evaluation of previous activities • Activity plan for upcoming year	Applications are received 4 times a year. Multiple applications per year are allowed for some project grants.	Annual application detailing project costs and revenue from other sources.
Adjudication Process	Internal by department staff	Peer jury representing a broad cross-section of Saskatchewan museums. Minimum of five jurors plus a chair.	Peer Jury – 4 members (individual members of Museums Alberta) plus a Chair. Jury is different for each grant run.	By Yukon Heritage Resources Board (YHRB)
Adjudication Criteria	Partially based on merit. Level II museums must submit policies based on recommended standards.	Successful application linked to *Standards for Saskatchewan Museums.*	Project guidelines are based upon Museums Alberta standards. Applications must demonstrate community support/cost sharing. Applicants are expected to demonstrate how the project	Successful application must meet program criteria and objectives.

Province	Manitoba: Community Museum Grant Heritage Grants Program	Saskatchewan: Museum Grant Program	Alberta: Special Projects Grants Program	Yukon: Yukon Historic Resources Fund
			relates to the annual plan for the museum.	
Other Sources of Grants	**Heritage Grants Program:** project funding available in the areas of collections management, conservation, exhibitions and programming. Up to 50% of the project cost can be provided. Preference given to projects that demonstrate strong community contribution, multiple funding and professional assistance is integrated into the project. **Special Theme Museums:** six special theme museums receive up to $55,000 as a contribution towards their operating budget. Funding linked to business plan/performance outcomes.	**MAS** offers two other project grants which are adjudicated by different juries: • Museum Public Programming Grant • First Nations/Métis Collections grant	**Alberta Historical Resources Foundation** also provides direct sponsorship for specific projects. **Community Initiatives Program (CIP)** 2004-05 funding (estimate) – $30 million: will support project-based initiatives in areas such as community services, libraries, arts and culture, sports, education, health and recreation. Maximum grant is $75,000 per project per year, and applications can be submitted anytime throughout the year.	**Heritage Training Fund** – provides funds for short-term training that will advance heritage workers in the Yukon. No maximum given but applicant must cover 10% of training cost.
Grant Follow-up	General review of annual reports.	Museums conduct self-evaluation of previous year's activities. MAS Advisory Service provides follow-up if requested.	Grant evaluation must be submitted no later than 13 months after the grant has been awarded. Evaluation must address: financial accountability, written report detailing how standards were followed, progress of the project, and its outcomes. Failure to complete a project evaluation will prohibit the institution from applying for future grants until an acceptable evaluation is submitted.	Applicants must provide written project report before receiving final 20% of project funds.

Provincial Arts Council Operating Assistance Programs

Province	Nova Scotia: Operating Assistance to Cultural Organizations	Ontario: Grants to Arts Organizations	Manitoba: Operating Grants for Visual Arts Organizations	Saskatchewan: Gallery Grant Program	Alberta Community Support Organizations Operating
Program Administrator	Tourism, Culture and Heritage, Government of Nova Scotia	Ontario Arts Council	Manitoba Arts Council	Saskatchewan Arts Board	Alberta Foundation for th Arts, Crown Agency
Program Objectives	To enhance stability within cultural organizations that develop and sustain Nova Scotia's cultural community. Support is provided to organizations which form a framework for the province's cultural sector, including those which produce cultural products, own and or manage cultural facilities, provide service to the cultural sector, and produce a cultural festival or event.	Operating Grants: To commit funding to the operating and programming expenses of professional arts organizations that meet the assessment criteria for ongoing support.	Provides ongoing, partial support to professional, not-for-profit visual arts organizations.	There are two components to this Program: 1. Assistance to Art Museums: supports the operation of not-for-profit art galleries and artist-run centres in the province which meet minimum museum standards. 2. The Centres of Contemporary Cultures Grant component supports the public programming of artists' collectives devoted to the development of evolving professional practice and programming which bridges traditional cultural practice and contemporary artistic practices.	Assists with annual operating expenses for community organizations in Alberta whose primary activity is the support and promotion of the arts.
Accepted Expenses	Expenses related to annual administrative and core operating costs	Covers operating expenses. No capital costs.	Expenses related to the operation of community museums. No capital expenses.	Expenses related to operation costs including salaries, administration, facilities maintenance and ongoing rent or mortgage costs, conservation and collections management, curatorial functions, staff	Programs and activities that facilitate artistic activity/participation in th community

Province	Nova Scotia: Operating Assistance to Cultural Organizations	Ontario: Grants to Arts Organizations	Manitoba: Operating Grants for Visual Arts Organizations	Saskatchewan: Gallery Grant Program	Alberta Community Support Organizations Operating
				training, exhibitions, public and education programming and communications.	
Funding Formula	The program will contribute no less than 5% and no more than 60% of revenues required to cover administrative or core program costs. Applicants may apply to achieve Three Year Funding Status under a separate application.	Based upon funds available and number of applicants.	Only one recipient in 2005 receiving $157,300	Note: Grants are awarded for a three-year period; Galleries: up to $21,000 Centres for Contemporary Cultures: up to $25,000	30% administration and 50% program expenses to a maximum of $40,000 pe applicant; total amount awarded in 2003/04 = $699,848 to 88 organizations
Eligibility Criteria	General requirements regarding public governance and maintain strict management and financial controls.	Public art galleries must: • Be not-for-profit and Ontario-based • Have been in operation for at least two years • Have a demonstrated record of regular, ongoing activities in their community • Have proof of sound financial management • Be governed by a board of directors	General requirements regarding public governance and maintain strict management and financial controls.	General requirements regarding public governance.	Alberta registered not-for profit organizations.
Application Process	Annual application	Annual application	Annual application	Deadline: November 1	Annual application
Adjudication Process	Applications are reviewed by staff and assessed and scored by an external assessment panel; judged upon how well the organization supports the goals of the Culture Division appropriate to the	Peer assessment by advisory panel; based upon artistic quality and organizational effectiveness	Peer assessment by professional artists who practice in the art forms represented by the applications; main criteria used to award grants is artistic merit.	Determined by the result of the partnership agreement between the Arts Board and SaskCulture.	Formula Grant

Province	Nova Scotia: Operating Assistance to Cultural Organizations	Ontario: Grants to Arts Organizations	Manitoba: Operating Grants for Visual Arts Organizations	Saskatchewan: Gallery Grant Program	Alberta Community Support Organizations Operating
	organization's mandate, programs and/or services.				
Adjudication Criteria		**Annual Grants:** provide ongoing funding to arts organizations towards professional arts programming that occurs every year. **Project Grants:** offer support to specific professional arts activities or series of events. Not automatically renewed from year to year.	**Annual Grants in the Visual Arts:** assists professional not-for-profit visual arts organizations and cultural organizations (including artist-run centres and public galleries who contribute to the development of the art form) participate in the development of Manitoba artists, and maintain strict management and financial controls.	The panel, which also adjudicates the Arts Board's Global Grants Program, designates funds among applicants.	
Other Sources of Grants				**Global Grants Annual Assistance:** Provides assistance to groups & organizations presenting short-term activities which benefit the arts and artists in Saskatchewan to a maximum of $10,000. **Global Grants Multi-Year Assistance:** Provides up to 3 years' assistance to groups & organizations providing ongoing programs in the arts.	**Within Alberta Foundation for the Arts** Community Support Organizations Projects – assists organizations with one-time only projects which provide support to artists in the production c their work to a maximum of $10,000
Grant Follow-up	General review of annual reports.	General review of annual reports.	General review of annual reports.	General review of annual reports.	General review of annual reports.

IV Survey of Recipients of Operating Assistance Programs

In consultation with Jeremy Long and Sue Donaldson of the BC Arts Council, a survey was prepared by Wendy Molnar and Catherine Cole for distribution to recipients of the Operating Assistance Programs. The e-mail addresses for the recipients of the Public Museums Operating Assistance Program (38 recipients) and the Visual Arts Operating Assistance Program (29 recipients) were provided by BC Arts Council. In addition, five e-mail addresses for members of the Advisory Committee were provided. The surveys were distributed in mid-February to recipients via e-mail and three reminders sent, again by e-mail. The return date was March 1, 2005. Seventy-two (72) surveys were distributed and twenty-nine (29) surveys were completed and returned to Cultural Visions Consulting. Of these 29 completed surveys, 15 indicated that their organization was a Visual Arts Organization and 14 indicated that they were a Public Museum. The completed surveys represent a 40% return rate. Although a return rate above 20% is traditionally considered an excellent result, there had been an expectation that the return rate would be higher. However, the comments made by the respondents are of value and will make a significant contribution to this program assessment. A copy of the survey is attached.

Below are the tabulated survey results and corresponding interpretation. Individual comments can be found in the attachment. A number of respondents contacted Wendy Molnar, either by e-mail or by telephone, to confirm the objectives of the survey and to ensure that the comments they made on the survey would be held in confidence. All individual replies are held in confidence and respondents will not be identified in this report.

1. **How effective do you think the BC Arts Council Operating Assistance Programs for Public Museums and Visual Arts Organizations are in meeting the needs of its clients?** (Rank with 1 being needs improvement to 5 being excellent)

Mean	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	7	6	11	2

Interpretation of Results: 65% of the respondents ranked the effectiveness of the Operating Assistance program at 3 and above. Conclusions from this result indicate that recipients are relatively satisfied with the effectiveness of the Programs in meeting their needs. However, 31% of the respondents indicate that improvement can be made.

2. **How well are the Programs' priorities aligned with the priorities of your organization?** (Rank with 1 being not very closely aligned to 5 being very closely aligned.)

Mean	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	1	1	4	5	13	5

Interpretation of Results: 62% of respondents ranked this question as a 4 or 5. This indicates that respondents see Program priorities as aligned to their own organizations. This result might be expected since only those organizations which current meet the criteria of the Program are invited to apply.

3. **How might these Program priorities be improved?**

Interpretation of Results: The responses can be grouped into the following themes:

- Program objectives needed to be updated to reflect the change in the cultural landscape.
- Programs recognize both organizational excellence and change and reward accordingly.
- The program should be more inclusive of First Nations or special themed institutions as finances are available.
- Multi-year commitment would help to ease the financial instability experienced by most organizations.
- More support for special exhibitions
- A multi-[disciplinary] approach would be better – e.g. an art gallery, a museum and a theatre
- Raising the profile of BC artists and institutions is very important part of "serving BC"

Individual Comments:

Review of the relationship of the individual organization to the community it resides in i.e. rural/urban, its size and demographics, its isolation or accessibility issues, the political climate it operates in, etc.

There seems to be a randomness to which municipality receives which amount…this has been very frustrating.

Language around First Nations - and other ethnically defined groups - should be more inclusive rather than distinct and separate.

Could (should) the point about encompassing the range of current...be better defined? What is the objective of the program?

The criteria is, thankfully, broad in scope and should continue to be so to account for diversity within the province.

We'd like to see greater recognition for excellence or outstanding achievement in the context of an institution's particular circumstance and location; more emphasis given to competent management and demonstration of broadly based community support.

Visual arts inclusion with human and natural history and thus payment of living artist fees does not mesh.

More emphasis on contemporary practices.

Multi year commitment.

The priorities are great. The problem is that are simply not enough dollars available to significantly offset overhead and operating costs of the institutions delivering on the priorities. Granted yours is the only program that gives ANY operating money anymore I wish it was better funded.

Be a little more flexible (as in practice I think program adjudications are) ??? how museums are responding.

All museums cannot cover museological ?? all the time.

Put some money behind the rhetoric.

Commitment over several years perhaps.

I think that smaller, rural communities that serve large geographic areas with diverse interests do not fit the same criteria as large or medium sized urban areas. I think BC ARTS COUNCIL does not recognize this nor care what the communities actually want...the priorities should include level of appreciation of the audience and work to bring the community along educationally instead of imposing priorities that fit someone else's agenda.

Recognition of changing circumstances, growth of organization and community served

Even after years of completing these applications, what is being supported remains very muddy. At times, it feels like getting numbers through the door and getting exposure out into the community are seen as more important than the kind of care the collection is receiving, and the quality of what the public is exposed to.

More attention to challenges faced by regional institutions outside the lower mainland, more representation by regions outside the lower mainland

Sit down with the people in the field and develop a set of consistent priorities that will have a decent shelf-life. I often think that I have correctly assessed the priorities only to learn later that I did not. Also – work with individual clients to determine their priorities, which may be different than those in neighbouring institutions but which are nevertheless, valid within their own setting. i.e. rural priorities often differ than those of larger urban centres; some communities have greater diversity than others; some have a business core comprised of small business as opposed to larger corporations, etc.
They do a good job now. More support if government provided it for special exhibitions that are internal to the province, etc. would be helpful.
In rural areas it is not always possible to have separate facilities for art galleries, museums and theatres. We are a cultural centre with an art gallery, a museum and a theatre. A multi cultural [multidisciplinary] approach would be better.
Additional funding.
The interpretation of serving the province of BC is perhaps to subjective and narrow. For example raising the profile of BC artists and institutions is very important part of "serving BC" but it seems under recognized.

4. **Does your organization currently meet all the eligibility criteria as set out in the Program Guidelines?**

Yes	No	No Response
23	4	2

Individual Comments:
Except that I do not understand the significance of the last bullet "has previously received at least two development project assistance awards in the three previous years from the BC Arts Council.". When I checked the website this looks like the criteria to apply for operating assistance.
Weak on First Nations
As far as we know

5. **How appropriate are the Program's eligibility criteria in relationship to your organization?** (Rank with 1 being not very appropriate to 5 being very appropriate)

Mean	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	1	0	0	3	11	14

Interpretation of Results: 86% of respondents rated this question as either 4 or 5 indicating that the eligibility criteria is appropriate to their organizations. Again, this could be explained by the fact that only those institutions that meet the criteria are allowed to apply to the Program.

6. **How might the eligibility criteria be improved?**

Interpretation of Results: The responses can be grouped into the following themes:

- Criteria should maintain focus on artistic excellence, good governance and sound financial management.
- Expansion of criteria to include special themed organizations.
- Greater emphasis upon non-traditional roles of museums such as marketing.

Individual Comments:

Not sure.

If the funding level was NOT the factor it is, we'd like to see eligibility extended to the competent, collection based organizations when their work is singularly important to the development of the larger community.

Increase "marketing" importance relative to the "classical" museum concerns of preservation and programming.

I may be shooting myself in the foot here, but with the expansion of the interpretation strategies in many museums and galleries into a "science centre" approach, it may become appropriate to add science centres in as eligible under your criteria. Our facility, for example, while certainly a community museum, is also our community science centre in many ways.

If anything they should be tightened to ensure that institutions a) are collecting have a collection and collections management program, and b) have a program of exhibits and programs.

Criteria should not be watered down but maintain focus on artistic excellence, good government & sound management.

Similar feeling as in question 3. As I write this I feel a bit of panic that perhaps criteria have changed and I haven't noticed. The problem with operating funding is that the dependency created is enormous and the tendency is to start from what you did last year rather than re-focus on the vision and mission of the organization

I think the eligibility criteria is good for operating in the current budget (for existing institutions)

The criteria could be broadened especially in small places.

7. **Should the criteria be expanded to include other institutions not currently eligible for assistance?**

Yes	No	Yes, but only if additional funding were available	No Opinion
1	5	16	7

Interpretation of Results: 55% of respondents felt that the criteria should be expanded to other institutions only if additional funding were available. 17% felt that the criteria should not be expanded.

Individual Comments:

Not if there is no commitment to providing adequate levels of support to the existing organizations that do qualify for the program.

8. **If yes, what types of institutions do you think should be included?** (Check more than one if needed)

No Response	Industrial history sites	Specialized organizations	Organizations related to specific cultural/ethnic communities
11	9	3	6

*Other (Please specify)*_____

- *organizations supporting scholarly research rather than delivery of services to public.*
- *Any "professionally managed" heritage site or facility that hosts "public" museum status.*
- *Science Centres*
- *Aquariums*
- *Some of those that are close to meeting the qualifications.*
- *Not Ethnic Based I would hope*
- *Arts organizations that provide a broad base of programming*
- *As long as they are collecting*

The Operating Assistance for Public Museums Program is currently administered by the BC Museums Association on behalf of the BC Arts Council. From your perspective, is the administration of the program efficient? (Rank with 1 being not very efficient to 5 being very efficient)

Public Museum Responses

Mean	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	1	0	0	1	6	6

Visual Arts Responses

Mean	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	10	1	0	1	0	3

Interpretation of Results: 12 out of a possible 14 Public Museums respondents (85%) rated the efficiency of the Program, as administered by the BCMA, as a 4 or 5 indicating a satisfaction of how it is currently administered. Although it was not expected that Visual Arts Organizations would respond to this question as they would have no experience with the BCMA administration, several did choose to answer the question.

Individual Comments:
Not involved in this grant stream
Don't know. How does one evaluate "efficiency" of an arts council?
It is not clear to those of us on the outside how that relationship works - I would think it would be very difficult to assess.

10. To which Operating Assistance Program does your organization apply?

Visual Arts	Public Museums
15	14

11. Is the application form clear and easy to complete?

Yes	No	No Response
21	7	1

Interpretation of Results: 72% of respondents indicated that the application forms were clear and easy to complete. Please see Question 12 for further interpretation.

Individual Comments:
Clear - yes, and more than complete.
Easy - not really!
Yes, now that I am used to it.

12. How might the application form be improved?

Interpretation of Results: The responses can be grouped into the following themes:

- Although the 72% of respondents felt the application form was clear and easy to complete (as indicated by the results of Question 11 above), many of the respondents reported that the financial section of the application form was either too daunting to complete, that they had difficulty fitting the information within the parameters of the allotted space or that the budget page was simply poorly formatted.
- Many reported that information should be carried over from year to year or updated on a bi-annual basis.
- Information should be updated only as necessary.

Individual Comments:
An on-line version was created but it is not user-friendly. Plus, some tombstone information could be retained on the form. The financial section could be more clearly defined, or more represented in standard accounting practices.
The budget is a challenge to fit into their categories because it does not allow for the categories of our city and Society budgets…it is too subjective to be able to compare applications because many people would categorize things differently. I would suggest a more flexible system that separates museums from arts groups and has room for more categories.
Simplify budget worksheet. Line items do not easily match accounts.
It has been improved considerably in recent years, though it could be less prescriptive. The budget format is problematic, allowing for arbitrary assignment of costs to "program" or "administration."
For operating funding a two or three year application seems to make more sense and would relieve some of the workload from overtaxed staff.
Simplify and clarify reporting info especially as it relates to statistics and finances; tailor forms so they are more relevant and appropriate to the specific nature of the client base. Currently we have to fit square boxes into a round hole and, as peer jurors, often find ourselves comparing apples to oranges; provide a space to track in-kind donations (e.g. volunteer hours, donations of services or supplies) which do not appear in a revenue statement. Finally, visitation is only one measure for a museum/gallery. Service levels perhaps are equally telling e.g., research inquiries, web site visits, etc., as to how a facility is serving its many different publics. Finally, we estimate that it takes two full weeks to complete this particular application and for some institutions you have to question the return on investment right now!

Brevity, it's like writing a thesis each year and takes 3 people 1 week to complete! The detail, the repetition is insane.
Financial information requested hard to extract from our financials.
Consistent budgetary requirements among provincial/ national funders.
Program description - what exactly needs to be described.
Would be prepared to discuss, but too complicated to write in a survey I only have a few moments for.
Budget page poorly formatted - too many little black boxes.
The budget format is more applicable to museums with "artists exhibitions," than to museums that do not have much of that type of programming (artist ??? should be an addendum).
It could be shorter with the financial information in a more simplified format to make it easier to match actual statements with application form.
The process of developing the BC Arts Council annual application is a very useful, if time consuming, event. I think that there are some bugs with the online application in previous years, but all in all I think the process is good.
It is hard to rework our financial statement into your format. We understand that it is best for you to make comparisons based on similar format and we are working on a translation key. It is still the hardest part of the application.
Streamlining so less labour intensive
Don't change it from year to year. It is onerous but that is ok if there is consistency from year to year.
The application is time consuming. In particular organizing our financial data to match the application funding guidelines.

13. How relevant are the Programs' Assessment Criteria? (Rank with 1 being not very relevant to 5 being very relevant)

Mean	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	3	0	1	5	15	5

Interpretation of Results: 69% of respondents ranked the Programs' Assessment Criteria as either 4 or 5 indicating that they felt the criteria was quite relevant or very relevant. One comment added was that the criteria should be simplified.

Individual Comments:
There are too many…simplify.
Account for an institution's development and growth over the years.

14. How valuable is the verbal or written feedback you receive about your application? (Rank with 1 not very valuable to 5 being very valuable)

Mean	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	5	4	5	7	4	4

Interpretation of Results: Respondents were divided on this issue. 31% of respondents ranked the feedback as a 1 or 2. 24% ranked the feedback as 3, or average. 28% ranked the feedback as a 4 or 5.

Individual Comments:
We don't hear much about the adjudication process.
It's always nice to get a note with some feedback.

15. How might the feedback you receive be improved?

Interpretation of Results: The responses can be grouped into the following themes:

- Written feedback is received but many respondents reported that it was very short and that they are not always clear upon what the feedback has been based.
- Respondents reported little verbal or personal feedback unless requested specifically. They reported a desire to have a closer working relationship with the grants coordinator.
- More two-way communication between grants coordinator and applicants.
- Feedback could make clearer links between comments and assessment criteria.
- When requested, further information has been provided by the grants coordinator, although some respondents reported that they rarely have time to seek out this further information.
- Respondents reported that they would like to know in what areas they should improve and which areas have been rated highly by the adjudicators.

Individual Comments:

Clear, measurable, feedback would be appreciated. An example of what a successful application looks like would be helpful.

At times the feedback has been useful but most of the time it seems very random…they seem to pick something that gives BC Arts Council an excuse not to increase our grant monies. The last feedback we received was almost laughable…[reason deleted to protect confidentiality]

Feedback could make clear links between comments and assessment criteria.

The feedback I have received has been concise and pointed. I have used it at the Association's AGM. It has helped communicate how the gallery is viewed by peers.

Comments are largely irrelevant and not useful at the present time. This is difficult to address because the jury doesn't have the time nor the particular longer term context of an organization in front of them and the funder doesn't want to enter in long debates about comment. Secondly, the "flavour of the month" factor that can creep into an adjudication process e.g. Aboriginal focus. These apparently informal criteria are never communicated in advance of an application, have a way of becoming formal in the adjudication process, are often randomly expressed in feedback. This phenomena has happened often enough that many applicants therefore try to cover every conceivable base – leading to more complicated and even lengthier submissions. In many cases, positive written feedback would be enough to keep moral up and perhaps even other money coming in. BC Arts Council award letters are shared with volunteer advisory and governance boards. They don't fully understand the adjudication jargon of "the jury noted..." when it is intended to be praise. Grants from entities like BC Arts Council provide more than money. They validate the work of an institution in a community and serve as a catalyst for securing other money and support.

In addition to the overall comments, which areas we ranked high or low. eg 40/50 on addressing BC Arts Council program priorities, 45/50 on standards of achievement or whatever ranking scale is used in categories.

We get little feedback.

We get one sentence. One sentence as a response to an application that may have 40 pages of information.

Not sure - there are so many applications ?? ??? staff available.

Mine has almost always been positive and short, more would be good.

I'm not sure it can be improved. Actually, I suspect that any shortening in the feedback has to do with my own lack of time to seek it out. Anyone I have spoken to at the BC Arts Council has always gone out of their way to help me out and answer questions.

We appreciate assessment by peers – the more the better. Unlike any of our other funders BC ARTS COUNCIL

can provide specialized feedback and response.
It is basically fine.
More direct communication with a granting officer.
The feedback is fine only it is always one-way communication. It feels as if no one reads the application I write explaining certain challenges we have to face...mostly it feels like...do this or you will not get another penny. We have worked hard to bring our gallery back to a level of survival and always feel threatened by the BC Arts Council...my understanding is that our tax dollars and our community is as valuable as any and should be respected. The BC Arts Council should act as advocates...not our bosses.
It would be helpful if there were a sense of partnership – rather than a punitive judgement.
This has varied somewhat from year to year (i.e. in some cases we have had very good and relevant feedback, and in others very little or no feedback) In some cases the feedback has been received on the next round of application (i.e. close to a year later). Perhaps a format that summarizes advisors comments or questions might be helpful.
We have not received a lot of feedback – apart from the historical funding challenges.
I have received very little feedback on our applications – but I've never asked.
Ensure that the people we are dealing with in the grant process are in fact, knowledgeable about museums – not just academically but through experience; that way, we are all talking the same language; provide more details – how was the feedback arrived at? Based on what?
OK as is.
Acknowledgement of any improvements we feel are made from year to year (Be specific). We spend a lot of time giving self assessment (in our current grant application). Does anyone read it? If so, what is the reaction? The grant could be useful as a means by which we get feedback. In a concrete sense, not just by getting the funding.
More specific feedback on exhibitions and programs unique to the institution.
More feedback would be great.
Appreciate being able to talk to the officer; officer should have budget to visit regional centres.
Please give us a fuller description of the feedback by the committee. One or two lines is very slim compared to the length/strength of the application. More feedback would be appreciated. We also sense the feedback from the juries doesn't always match the vision of BC Arts Council and staff. There should be clear feedback (i.e. understanding on all parts).
Have received minimal feedback.

16. Currently, all the applications received from public museums and visual arts organizations are assessed by a group of advisors representing the museums and visual arts communities in BC. Is this an appropriate structure?

Yes	No	No Opinion
19	4	6

Interpretation of Results: 66% of respondents indicate that the current structure for the advisory committee is appropriate.

Individual Comments:
As long as there is representation from organizations and areas that are similar and have similar challenges. Not bad, but could be improved.
Someone has to do it – peer assessment seems to be the norm.

17. If not, what changes would you suggest?

Interpretation of Results: The responses can be grouped into the following themes:

- Separate the Advisory Committee into two separate committees: museums and visual arts.
- Ensure that the adjudicators include generalists and avoid representations from one discipline (i.e.: not all directors on the Committee)
- Representation from other sectors such as tourism.
- A more advisory role with staff proving input based on scoring against criteria.

Individual Comments:

I would separate the museums and the visual arts…obviously they have similarities but the differences are large enough to warrant a group of advisors for both professions.

We support peer review. However, we prefer a discipline oriented type of jury. Example: Visual arts facilities and museum facilities are very different in their space allocations, their space flexibility, their mandates, their community linkages etc. A strong juror who doesn't understand the different nature of these operations can often have a truly negative impact on a decision. There is value in a combined approach however and if that is to continue then we would hope that a new system would allow for a solid juror orientation and an opportunity to build a more consistent appraisal system over time - not an episodic system. We recognize that sitting on a jury is an educational experience, a form of professional development and should be encouraged. […] gained as much as we gave in the years we served! Although museum advisors on museums is good, when I see the list of who are museum people, there is often built in bias. Perhaps a couple of generalists of community would be good.

There needs to be more input from the tourism industry for instance and others.

Seems a fair system. The problem is that juries have so little movement because funding has remained static. Thus to reward an institution it is necessary to penalize another one, which is hardly just.

Actually the committee is a good idea. The problem is that I don't think the committee represents the diverse communities throughout the province or the diverse position on "how we serve" those communities. Mostly it seems to have one opinion and a very narrow perspective and understanding of visual arts in small communities.

The […] needs more representation on the advisory council. The council is currently not reflective of the province.

I'm not sure that the panel is free of bias in some cases, as is often with peer review. I favour a more advisory role with staff proving input based on scoring against criteria.

The division of museums and galleries seems artificial and doesn't allow for them to grow from one and other.

18. How satisfied are you with the level of funding your organization receives from the province through the BC Arts Council? (Rank with 1 being not at all to 5 being very satisfied)

Mean	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	2	9	9	7	2	0

Interpretation of Results: 86% of respondents ranked their satisfaction with the level of funding received from the province as 1, 2 or 3. Just two respondents ranked their level of satisfaction as 4 and 2 did not respond. Given the constant financial struggles of museums and visual arts organizations, this result was not surprising and quite predictable.

Individual Comments:

We are thankful for the support we do receive – but additional support is desired to maintain let alone increase our ability to deliver programs and manage the collection.
The levels of support are way too low, putting BC organizations at a distinct disadvantage compared, say, to their European or Quebec counterparts.

19. How important is the funding you receive through the Operating Assistance Program to the ongoing operation of your organization? (Rank with 1 being not at all to 5 being very important)

Mean	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
	1	0	1	3	1	23

Interpretation of Results: 83% of respondents ranked the importance of receiving the Operating Assistance funding as 4 or 5. Again, this level of importance placed upon the assistance received could be predictable given the ongoing financial challenges of the recipients.

Individual Comments:
It's not as much the amount but the source. It validates what we do in the eyes of the community.

20. What was your organization's annual operating budget for the last fiscal year ?

No Response	Under $100,000	$100,000-250,000	$250,000-500,000	$500,000-1 million	Over $1 million
2	2	3	9	8	5

21. What amount did your organization receive from the Operating Assistance Program during your last fiscal year?

No Response	Under $5,000	$5,000-10,000	$10,000-25,000	$25,000-50,000	$50,000-75,000	$75,000-100,000	Over $100,000
1	1	4	9	8	3	1	2

22. How has this amount varied over the past five years?

Increased	Decreased	Remained Constant	No Response
5	6	17	1

23. How has the relative importance of this funding to your organization's operating revenues changed over the past five years?

Increased	Decreased	Remained Constant	No Response
15	5	8	1

Interpretation of Results for Questions 22 & 23: The majority of respondents reported that the amount received from the Operating Assistance Program has either remained constant or has decreased over the last 5 years. This would be consistent with the results of Question 23, which indicate that the relative importance of this funding has also increased.

24. What percentage of your operating budget comes from each of the following sources?

Public Museums Responses (2 No Response)

BC ARTS COUNCIL	Fed Govt	Prov Govt	Municipal/ Local Govt	Private Donation	Corp Sponsors	Earned Revenue
8	0	0	28	16	12	36
10	25	6	25	varies	varies	varies
17	0	0	13	12	5	53
NR	varies	40-50	1-2	varies	0	10-15
2.5	0	0	90	1	0	7.5
4	0	4	45	2	5	40
5	1	18	55	1	2	18
15	0	0	35	15	0	35
10	2	0	33	6	12	37
6	6	0	79	1	2	6
5	3	5	83	0	1	3
2	0	30	0	1	0	67

Visual Arts Responses

BC ARTS COUNCIL	Fed Govt	Prov Govt	Municipal/ Local Govt	Private Donation	Corp Sponsors	Earned Revenue
8	6	0	30	varies	varies	25
10	35	30	15	5	0	5
15	0	0	0	6	3	76
11	8.5	0	12	6	4.5	58
3	12	3	52	5	5	20
4.7	1.2	10.3	4.2	5.9	0	73.6
12	5	0	23	0	0	15
2	40	10	5	10	0	20
6	5	21	9	6	0	53
5	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
6	22	0	42	1	3	26
NR	65	14	5	4	6	6
5	7	12	53	4	7	12
5.9	26.4	7.8	7.4	46.7	1.7	3.6
5	2	11	39	9	2	32

25. Who is responsible for completing and submitting the Operating Grant application?

Director	Fund Development Officer	Board President	Other
25	2		6

26. Aside from financial challenges, please provide the top three challenges your organization may be facing within the next 3 years.

Results and Conclusions: The responses can be grouped into the following themes:

- High staff workload and burnout
- The need for succession planning
- physical plant aging and capacity
- sustaining/attracting volunteers and board members
- Board development and restructuring
- Changing community resulting in increased demand for programming
- necessity of technological upgrade and development
- many respondents noted a difficult time separating financial challenges from all other challenges

Individual Comments:

Difficult to identify challenges that do not relate to funding: the need for a purpose built exhibition hall means human resources to mount a capital campaign, increase staffing to operate a larger gallery, professional development needed to grow the staff to be more effective in their positions.

We are at an absolute crisis at our offsite storage warehouse. Streamlining the coordination of activities with all heritage groups in the City to provide the best possible service without overlap or repetition. Develop an updated Museum/Heritage Strategy for City Council.

Staff work space, collection storage, staffing level.

Disposition of now-dormant, city-owned collection; board development tied to fundraising needs; stable and consistent delivery of education programs without staff; public awareness (and marketing) challenge - how to do it with no funds; retention of trained staff in competition with private sector wages; development of new programs with inadequate resources to sustain current level of service.

1. Renewing a partnership agreement with the City.
2. Maintaining key staff positions (I know it is financial - sorry).
3.Upgrading security in the Gallery (Again, I know it is financial - sorry)

Development of a new facility - we operate daily at or even beyond capacity in an aging facility and are in the feasibility study phase.
Responding to the constant increase in demand for an ever diversity of services.
Succession planning.

Inadequate funding for research.

Staff burnout & succession
physical plant aging and capacity
sustaining/ attracting volunteers

Managing growth, ie: budget, staff, structures
Realizing our global potential and using it
Larger facilities

1 Succession planning/ HR concerns
2 stabilized funding
3 Workload of small staff

Financial demands from technology - need for upgrading equipment constantly.
A rapidly growing community, resulting in increased demand for programming but limited resources to expand.
No culture of philanthropy in industry to enable funding support.

1. Expand our marketing plan thru tourist visitors (must establish a superior position).
2. Increase our conservation efforts.
3. Staff training.

We are moving into a new space twice as large so capital and operational issues are major as well as planning very important but at the same time we have to find time to continue operations in the current space. All this with limited human resources but the City has been supportive.

1. Board restructuring and development.
2. Development of a region wide 5-year cultural plan.
3. Increasing demand for support from our organization throughout the northern half of the Province in the area of curatorial, programming, marketing and operational expertise.

Operating funds have been very hard to secure. We have boosted earned revenue by over 25% in the past 5 yrs to allow for growth but we have maxed out how much we can garner from self-generated sources. We need more from all levels of gov't to allow for this. Our programs and overall attendance + professional service is dramatically increasing – we need more heat/ light/ wages funding to meet the demand for service.

- Moving to new facilities and maintaining programs
- Re-assessing credibility of artifact collection and its relevance to the priority of the institution
- Capital fundraising is increasing operating donors.

1. Space - we need to expand.
2. Board development
3. Support for international projects & publishing

- *operational funding (spending too much time trying to find money and not enough time running programs*
- *competing for private money...corporations not giving as much*

•competing with larger galleries who have access to more money and can afford higher artist fees

1. New public gallery building, supported by all levels of government and capital campaign - will it continue to be supported for operations now that capital is almost complete?
2. Board succession and governance
3. Professional development opportunities for staff

Greater Focus and closer alignment with Vision and Mission
Increasing community involvement and ownership
Partnering

•Growing demands from popularity of district, cultural corridor and Tourism […]
•City is growing very quickly
•Possible building expansion - 2009 completion

-sustainability of large exhibition program
–facility issues - no new building - what now?
-ability to grow revenues to sustain programs

1. convincing municipal governments that we require enhanced financial assistance; grants from the four core municipalities have remained static for close to ten years; inflation and rising operational costs (that are beyond our control), continue to diminish the real spending power of these annual grants; the same can be said for the operating assistance grant from the BC ARTS COUNCIL – we lose ground every year and now that we are paying rent of our building for the first time since approx 1978, we are working even harder just to be operationally viable while the demands placed on us by the public never diminish – I should point out that our staff complement is smaller than it was ten years ago
2. we need a new building; too small, inadequate services, frustrating to work in – the list goes on and on; we cannot fully explore and present our rich […] heritage in this structure and revenue generation on this site is finite. We are currently exploring the feasibility of re-locating to a new facility on one of several proposed sites – hopefully, we'll last long enough to get there!
3. trying to avoid the burn-out of staff and board members who put in incredible hours just to ensure that we remain viable; everyone spends more and more "finding money" while less time is spent on collections care, re-vamping existing exhibits and creating new ones and engaging the public

1. develop a source of financial support for marketing; if I had a dollar for everyone who told me that "if you only market yourselves more, you'll be alright," I'd be a rich [person]; it's not that I don't understand this, it's just the sheer expense of media buys etc, etc; some financial help would be wonderful or some attempt to co-ordinate marketing on behalf of and with museums, at the provincial level – not just a "one off" like we saw some years ago via the BCMA, but consistently year after year; we are just as valuable as ski resorts, golf courses and sports – let's find a way to get on the map
2. some additional assistance for the creation of BC related travelling exhibits or public programmes that could travel from region to region;
3. help to improve our crumbling physical infrastructures – many museums and galleries in BC are getting old and need considerable work to bring them up to modern standards; this is becoming a crisis that I am not sure is being recognized;
4. let's ensure there is adequate funding for core operations so we can get on with the job of developing new and full

partnerships, engaging the electronic age and creating relevant links to the community; we need to feel that there is a bright future ahead of us

1. master planning for 25 years of physical space
2. expanded and diversified funding and revenue generation
3. managing staff workloads/growth/renewal

1. Inadequate funding for major capital projects.
2. Increasing cost of marketing and promoting our museum effectively.
3. Increasing financial and operational challenges of museum's growing reliance on IT and technologies.

BC Arts Council/BCMA
Survey of Recipients/Non-recipients of Operating Assistance
January 2005

The BC Arts Council and the BCMA are conducting an evaluation of the Operating Assistance for Public Museums and Visual Arts Organizations Program. They would like to determine the degree to which this program is achieving its objectives; the efficiency and equity of the current adjudication process and assessment criteria by which award recommendations are determined; and the relevance of current program objectives within the contemporary context of museums and visual arts practice. The results of this survey will be used to develop recommendations to improve the program.

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey and return it to Cultural Visions Consulting by fax at 204-885-1688; by e-mail to culturalvisions@shaw.ca; or by mailing to 262 Overdale Street, Winnipeg, MB R3J 2G3 by February 25, 2005. All individual replies will remain confidential.

Section I: Evaluating the Current Program

1. **How effective do you think the BCAC/BCMA Operating Assistance Program is in meeting the needs of its clients?** (Rank with 1 being needs improvement to 5 being excellent)
   1 2 3 4 5

2. **How well do the Program priorities align with the priorities of your museum or gallery?** (Rank with 1 being not very closely aligned to 5 being very closely aligned.)
   1 2 3 4 5

3. **How might the Program priorities be improved?**
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. **Does your museum currently meet all the eligibility criteria as set out in the Program Guidelines?**
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. **How appropriate are the Program's eligibility criteria in relationship to your museum?** (Rank with 1 being not very appropriate to 5 being very appropriate)
   1 2 3 4 5

6. **How might the eligibility criteria be improved?**
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

7. **Should the criteria be expanded to include other institutions not currently eligible for assistance?** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes, but only if additional funding were available ☐ No Opinion

8. **If yes, what types of institutions do you think should be included?** (Check more than one if needed)
   ☐ Industrial history sites ☐ Specialized museums ☐ First Nations museums
   ☐ Museums related to specific cultural/ethnic people
   ☐ Other (Please specify)_____

9. **How important is it to your museum that the BCMA administer the Operating Assistance Program to museums?** (Rank with 1 being not very important to 5 being very important)
   1 2 3 4 5

A – If your institution currently receives funding, please answer questions 10-20 then skip to question 24; if you do not receive funding, skip directly to question 21.

10. **Is the application form clear and easy to complete?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. **How might the application form be improved?**
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

12. **How relevant are the Program's assessment criteria?** (Rank with 1 being not very relevant to 5 being very relevant)
    1 2 3 4 5

13. **How valuable is the feedback you receive about your application?** (Rank with 1 not very valuable to 5 being very valuable)
    1 2 3 4 5

14. **How might the feedback you receive be improved?**
    _____
    _____
    _____

15. **Currently all the applications received by public museums and visual arts organizations are assessed by the same set of jurors and advisors. In your opinion, should there be one set of jurors for museums and one for visual arts organizations?**
    ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No Opinion

16. **How satisfied are you with the level of funding your receive from the BCAC/BCMA?** (Rank with 1 being not at all to 5 being very satisfied)
    1 2 3 4 5

17. **How important is the funding you receive through the Operating assistance program to the ongoing operation of your museum/gallery?** (Rank with 1 being not at all to 5 being very important)
    1 2 3 4 5

B – If your institution does not currently receive funding from this program, please answer questions 18-20:

18. **Has your museum ever submitted an application to the Operating Grant Program?**
    ☐ Yes ☐ No

19. **If yes, were you successful?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

20. **If you were not successful, what was the reason provided?**

    _____

    _____

    _____

II Demographic Questions

21. **What is your museum's operating budget?**

22. **How much money did you receive from the Operating Assistance Program during the last fiscal year?**

    _____

23. **How has this amount varied over the past five years?**
    ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ Remained constant

24. **How has the relative importance of this funding changed over the past five years?**
    ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ Remained constant

25. **What percentage of your operating budget comes from each of the following sources?**
    ☐ Federal Government ☐ Private Donations
    ☐ Provincial Government ☐ Corporate Sponsorship
    ☐ Municipal/Local Government ☐ Earned Revenue

26. **Who is responsible for completing and submitting the Operating Grant application?**
    ☐ Director ☐ Fund Development Officer ☐ Board President
    ☐ Other, please identify _____

27. **Which application do you complete?**
    ☐ Visual Arts ☐ Public Museums

V Discussion Paper

Program Evaluation

An evaluation of the BC Arts Council Operating Assistance Programs is currently underway. The purpose of this review is to:

- Assess the degree to which the programs of the Operating Assistance for Visual Arts Organizations and Public Museums are achieving their objectives;
- Assess the extent to which current program objectives support the strategic priorities of the BC Arts Council;
- Assess the efficiency and equity of the current adjudication process and assessment criteria by which award recommendations are determined;
- Assess the relevance or current program objectives within the contemporary context of museums and visual arts organizations practices;
- Recommend changes to current programs and process to better achieve program and Arts Council objectives taking into consideration current trends and future priorities of the sector.

As one of the first steps in this process, as survey was recently conducted with funding recipients. In the next step, consultations will be held in Victoria, Vancouver, Kelowna and by teleconference with stakeholders from beyond the urban centres, to review the programs and recommend improvements. The discussions will be approximately 2 hours in length, with 8-12 participants in each, and provide an opportunity to explore some of the findings from the survey, interviews, and literature review. Questions will be focused on three aspects of the program: Funding, Application Process and Adjudication Process.

Background

The British Columbia Arts Council (BCAC) and its predecessor, the British Columbia Arts Board, has provided financial assistance for the operating costs of Visual Arts Organizations (public galleries and artist-run centres) for over 30 years. Operating assistance to Public Museums has been provided through the same program for the past 22 years.

Assistance was provided to both sectors through one program until 1995/96 at which point, following an internal program review conducted in 1994/95, distinct program guidelines were introduced for each sector. Since 1996, the British Columbia Museums Association (BCMA) has had a contract with the BCAC to administer the annual Operating Assistance Program for Public Museums on behalf of the BCAC. The BCMA administers the Operating Assistance Program for Public Museums under the guidance of its Grants Coordinator. The BCAC administers the Operating Assistance Program for Visual Arts Organizations under the guidance of the Coordinator of Visual and Media Arts Program.

Museums and visual arts organizations must meet the Program Criteria in order to submit an application for operating assistance. However, there are a few discrepancies due to inherited responsibilities for funding organizations previously funded through other provincial government departments. For example, although industrial heritage organizations are not eligible for funding, some organizations such as the BC Forest Museum Society do receive funding.

There has been little change over the years in regards to which organizations receive operating assistance funds. Although some organizations have been dropped from the program; these organizations either no longer met the eligibility criteria or no longer had the capacity to successfully fulfil their responsibilities towards the program. Due to 10 years of frozen or reduced allocations to the BCAC, any increase to a client's award or addition of a new client to the operating assistance program has had to come from existing operating client awards.

In the fall of 1996, the provincial government reduced the BC Arts Council budget by $4 million. This had the impact of reducing the Museums Operating Budget from $1.574 million in 1996/97 to $1.32 million in 1997/98. Similarly, the Visual Arts Operating Budget went from $1.59 million in 1996/97 to $1.27 million in 1997/98. To assist the Advisory Committees deal with this reduction, and also to some extent mitigate the impacts of history on the pattern of distribution, the base grants were reduced by 20% across the board and the committees were then instructed to rebuild to the available budget levels. In 2000/2001 there was a one-time payment of $3.6 million to the BC Arts Council by which all museums and visual arts operating clients received a 19% one time payment. The BC government recently announced an increase to the BC Arts Council annual budget in March 2005.

I Program Objectives

Operating Assistance Visual Arts Organizations
Awards are available to visual arts organizations in support of programs and services which engage people in the recognition, understanding and development of the visual arts. Awards are intended to support programs and services which encompass a range of current artistic, cultural and heritage interests represented in the organization's constituency and within a broader contemporary art discourse. Programs and services should be determined through ongoing representation of and consultation and partnership with the constituency.

Eligible areas of support include, but are not limited to:
a) Public Programs and Services – research, interpretation, presentation, exhibition, distribution, publication, access, outreach, education, training opportunities, consultation, and residencies.

b) Collections – acquisition, loans, co-ownership, repatriation, research, care, and documentation of both object- and knowledge-based collections.

c) Governance and Administration – strategic planning and ongoing policy development; board development and staff training, and professional development for artists.

Operating Assistance For Public Museums
Awards are available to public museums and visual arts organizations in support of programs and services which engage people in the recognition, understanding, and development of human and natural history and the visual arts, including the diverse cultures of First Peoples and the world.

Program Priorities

Provision of operating assistance is based upon the following priorities:
- programs and services which encompass the range of current artistic, cultural, and heritage

interests represented in the organization's constituency. These programs and services should be determined through ongoing representation of, consultation and partnership with, their constituency;
- First Peoples' rights to and interests in, the materials and knowledge of both traditional and contemporary cultures of First Peoples;
- programs which encourage education and lifelong learning;
- provision of intellectual and physical access to collections and services;
- the compensation of living artists through the payment of fees to artists, and adherence to provisions of the Canadian Copyright Act;
- accountability in the management of programs and operations;
- exploration of new forms of expression, and delivery of programs and services.

Survey Results

The survey of funding recipients found that funding received is critical to the sustainability of these organizations. However, most recipients do not feel that they get enough funding from the BC Arts Council and would appreciate increased support. Program eligibility reflects the community at the time that the programs were established, but new organizations, and those with mandates beyond the current criteria, are ineligible. Fifty-five percent of funding recipients would like to see the program eligibility expanded to include industrial history sites, organizations related to specific cultural and ethic communities and specialized organizations, but only if additional funding were available.

- Are the program objectives still valid 10 years later, given the demographic shift in BC, the increased emphasis on culture as a driver of economic development in small communities? How effectively do you think the program objectives reflect the cultural landscape in BC?

- Some people have said that multiyear funding would improve their organizational stability, and their ability to leverage funds, and reduce the amount of time spent applying for project funding; what impact do you think multiyear funding would have upon your institution?

- How do you define community? Are cultural community museums community museums?

- If the funding program were expanded, what institutions do you think should be included and why? (e.g., industrial history sites, organizations related to specific cultural/ethnic communities, specialized organizations, etc.)

- What impact is the growing number of First Nations' projects having on the museum and visual arts communities?

II Application Process

Most applicants (72%) find the form clear and easy to complete, but some find the financial section difficult to complete, and commented about the inordinate amount of time required to complete the application relative to the amount of money being granted. Some commented that they should not have to resubmit information that does not change, and that the online version is not user-friendly.

Potential applicants approach the grants coordinator prior to submitting an application to ensure that they meet the eligibility requirements; only those eligible for funding apply. Applications are edited if they go beyond the allowed length. Staff analyses the applicant's financial statements, statistics and budget projections. Staff comments upon the submission based upon the previous year's intentions compared to reported activities, previous Advisory Committee comments, or significant changes within the organization.

- How could the application process be improved?

- 85% of respondents feel that administration of the program by the BCMA is efficient: do you think the BCMA should continue to administer the program for public museums or should the BCAC administer both programs directly, and why?

III Adjudication Process

The Advisory Committee is made up of equal numbers of museum and visual arts organization representatives, plus an independent artist or curator. The committee reviews applications as they are presented by the grants coordinator. Applications are evaluated based on the stated Assessment Criteria guidelines. There is no formal evaluation grid.

- 66% of survey respondents indicate that the current structure, one Advisory Committee for both the Operating Assistance Programs for Visual Arts Organizations and Public Museums Assistance Program was appropriate; what do you think are the relative merits of a combined committee versus experts in each area reviewing applications in their own field?

- Some respondents suggested that professional museology standards should be more formally taken into consideration in evaluating applications. Do you agree? If so, how?

- Survey respondents were divided about how valuable they find the feedback that they currently receive. Some noted that it would be helpful to have more communication between the grants coordinator and the applications. What kinds of feedback would be most helpful to you in preparing future applications?

VI Focus Groups

Museums and Visual Arts Organizations in Victoria

Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, June 15, 2005

Participants:
Linda Hogarth, Curator/Education Manager, Campbell River Museum
Elida Peers, Executive Director/Curator, Sooke Region Historical Society
John Harris, Director, Victoria College of Art Society
Rick Duckles, Manager/Curator, BC Forest Museum
Evelyn Gillespie, Comox Valley Art Gallery
Jean McIntosh, Director, Alberni Valley Museum
Greg Evans, Executive Director, Maritime Museum of British Columbia
Deborah Griffiths, Director, Courtenay Museum
Barb Lucas, Finance Officer, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria

I Program Objectives

- Not clear how program objectives are being interpreted
- Increased emphasis on culture as a driver in economic activity: new money that is being spent provincially is being spent on tourism, to market culture, not on the development of the cultural products themselves; culture is a driver of economic development; some of the money currently going into tourism should be going into cultural institutions
- Museums sometime partner with tourism centres, i.e., provide tourism information, but funding not increasing in that area
- BC Supernatural brand is commonly understood, but many people come to Vancouver Island specifically for arts & heritage attractions
- *Seattle Post* marketing would be worthwhile, but is not affordable for an individual institution
- Emphasis in tourism industry is on hotels; people don't travel just to stay in hotels, they travel to visit museums and art galleries; cultural institutions should get preferential rates within tourism marketing vehicles
- Erroneous belief that the cultural input, the art, will somehow make its way to a cultural institution, that galleries require more support than the developers of cultural products
- Needs to be a re-prioritizing; in order to make culture available within the province; need to support cultural activities in schools at all levels: music, art classes, etc.; museums and galleries expected to provide art education, but not compensated for doing so
- Guidelines are about basic museology, basic museum standards
- Inequity between institutions as a result of history: what factors could equalize that, i.e., population size?
- Priority appears to be on programs/products, rather than on behind-the-scenes activities; why so program-focused, i.e. improvements in collections management aren't ranked as highly as programming?
- Questions should be about money/viability, not programming
- Eligibility should be expanded
- Program has a lot of history, amount of money hasn't grown
- Need to do a more thorough process to ensure museums include the reality of the province

- Comparison between small communities and urban centres; realities in one-person museum are such that they can't advocate their positions; how does program still support smaller museums when they can't meet professional standards?
- Has been some prejudice re: single-theme museums, some of which have provincial mandates; can think of some that should receive funding, i.e., BC Sports Hall of Fame & Museum; single-theme museums with provincial mandates should be eligible
- Payment of CARFAC fees seems to be a deciding factor for art galleries in terms of eligibility; many exhibiting galleries not eligible
- Proud of the fact that there are criteria, and that their institution meets the criteria; useful to the institution itself, there should be more
- Weight between behind-the-scenes and programming needs to be more equitable;

II Application Process

- Would like application process to be highly transparent
- Editing of application text is perceived to be a problem – not just because there were too many words; editing can change the meaning of a statement; text should not be edited; edits are not seen until just before application for next year is submitted, so there's nothing applicants can do about it; editing should not be allowed
- Word counts should be specified and applications cut off after the limit, rather than text being edited by the grants officer; VMC application has an automatic cut-off
- On-line application more objective
- Happy that applications are now being received electronically; would like to see electronic applications available after they're submitted so they could be used by the museum for other purposes; but, technology needs to be used more effectively; shouldn't just be used for the one-off purpose of applying for funding; person reviewing electronic applications should not change them
- Statistics gathered through applications should be analyzed and distributed to museums in a way that they could be shared and used in advocacy
- Program officer not familiar with the institutions themselves; between the BCAC and BCMA, grants officers should visit each of the institutions; they need to see the institutions
- Budget needs to be allocated towards site visits, to better inform grants officers
- Could application be simplified? Too much detail? Have to describe two full years programming, the year completed and the year anticipated, including: objectives, results, etc. – can't do it within the limits that are proscribed
- Evaluation of the former year could be a general evaluation, rather than exhibition by exhibition
- Don't like being treated like a child (i.e., work edited, nature of feedback provided); also confusing, grants officer position could/should be an advocacy position, helping organizations to secure funding; process is demeaning, when it could be more positive
- Hours of attendance, opening hours – how important are they? This is an operating grant, therefore, institutions have to operate; would it be possible to consider closing a museum for a period of time (e.g., for renovations) and still be eligible for operating funding?
- Institutions have been told not to change the way financial information is reported, even though institutions themselves have changed dramatically; categories could be more aligned to museum functions; appears that the reporting may be more relevant to visual arts organizations than to museums; financial reporting could be different between them

- There is a different criteria for public museums and visual arts organizations, so why isn't there a different form?
- Not a lot of room to talk about museological activities – issue more relevant to collecting institutions
- The allocation of how dollars are spread around may be arbitrary to fit the forms; difficult to allocate how many resources, particularly staff time, allocated to which tasks
- Recipients should track how much time it takes to complete the application
- Recipients dread filling in the forms – the financial reporting needs a major overhaul
- Don't know who designed it, or who it's designed for; what is the value of the statistics themselves; they should sit down with a group of people who have been reporting for years and find out what would be useful to the museums themselves
- Would be great to see all levels of government come up with the same grouping/ reporting structure
- How is the information used? Is all that detail really necessary? Why isn't an audited financial report adequate? Municipal museums show up as one line on the municipal audited budget, so it wouldn't tell anything; others say their audited statements are so confusing, or contain many categories that are not on the BCAC budget breakdown that they would be very hard to interpret
- Written part of the application more important than the financials in terms of explaining what the institution is doing
- Some people are good at writing, presenting themselves, but their statements can not be supported – need to be supported by site visits
- The BCAC needs to ensure that what is happening at museums is what is being stated
- BCAC staff is not available to discuss crises, no contingency funding
- Personal and professional relationships with BCAC staff are important
- Work they go through, for what they receive from BCAC, tremendous – a month of staff time
- Simpler is better in terms of delineating the 10 keys standards, the evaluation criteria; if the BCAC is going to go that route, a group of people need to be brought together to hammer them out; not everybody should be expected to maintain the same standards; has to be an assessment of whether or not things are changing; institutions should be expected to evolve, and be rewarded for improvement against their own benchmarks

III Adjudication Process

- Feedback sometimes boiler plated, i.e., grants officer pointing out the need to address problems that have already been solved; sometimes appears that the grants officer is writing to the wrong institution
- Advisory Committee considered to be organic: would like to know that within the adjudication system there are enough people with basic museology understanding to make recommendations
- More important that the grants officer be knowledgeable and make site visits, than that it be administered by the BCMA; curious that BCMA doesn't administer grants to galleries
- Would like to be clearer on the relationship between the BCMA and the BCAC – more transparency about BCMA role
- BCMA ED used to sit in on the adjudication process
- Advisory Committee: it's a strength to have a combined jury; people who are less familiar with the discipline can speak as a member of the public rather than as an insider

- Would like to stop reading between the lines on the feedback, find some of the comments cryptic, another page, or bullet form comments; recipients have to phone to follow up and get clarification
- Is there a requirement that there be some criticism in the letter?
- Major change/improvement/raising of standards, should be recognized
- The amount of discussion that takes place at the Advisory Committee level is not reflected in the comments
- Many ED's have long-term established professional relationships with BCAC staff and grants office and ensure that important issues and challenges are communicated, as well as making the process of clarification or correction of errors pretty straightforward
- How will upcoming retirements within the BCAC impact the program? program doesn't work well enough for new staff not to cause a huge problem; succession planning within the BCAC an issue; hopes that whoever takes over is the right person for the job

IV Funding

- Strength of this program is that it's operating money, not project funding; additional $3 million should be allocated to operating programs
- BCAC staff has worked for years under pressure of having to turn people down, give museums less, and is sensitive about it, recipients feel they have to keep quiet rather than offend staff, goodwill of staff perceived of as essential
- BCAC: if they're going to create new funds, they should introduce marketing funds; provincial government could establish a fund that networks of museums could access; this fund could help museums to create partnerships with media
- Question of multiyear funding: was tried before, but it appears that the only institution that was satisfied with the program was the BCMA; concerns raised by other (five?) institutions that had received multiyear funding contributed to the discontinuation of the program
- Two years might work, as with Canada Council grant
- Institutions not applying could be visited under a system where x% were visited each year
- Unforeseen expenses can't be addressed
- Cost of insurance has increased significantly particularly over last 2 years; e.g,$12,000-$27,000 for one institution; operational costs beyond the control of museums are increasing but the value of the grant is not; therefore the value of the grant has decreased
- Would like to have multiyear funding, easier to approach foundations/corporate sponsors, but more concerned about having a streamlined process for the annual application
- Gallery receives more from gaming than from all other sources, and it's 3-year funding so it gives them something to count on; can be doubled-edged, a reduction is also for a 3-year period
- Funding has to back up any expansion of the program; existing clients not prepared to take a cut to their own budgets
- Institutions that are cut should be cut through a reasoned, planned, consultative process, rather than in a way that appears arbitrary
- Cuts are forever, it hasn't been possible to regain a past position following resolution of a crisis; adjudication committees reluctant to cut because they know that; funding has been restored in some cases
- Difference between external crises and self-induced crises; i.e., new expenses due to external costs, poor management an internal issue

- How aware is the BCAC of what other funding programs institutions can/can not apply to? i.e., educational institutions can not apply for Gaming funding, so fewer sources of funding available; decisions seem to be made in isolation
- Value of BCAC application to funding received from other sources, sign of support/value; funding from the BCAC leverages other dollars
- Board/staff feel there's no reward for overachieving, doesn't make any difference; BCAC would go along way to making friends if there was some reward for achievement
- The site visits and positive, detailed feedback would provide some reward, at least to staff morale; feedback is used by museums to take to their boards/funders at the local levels
- There is a lot of expertise within government that museums could benefit from; perhaps a form of reward could be to facilitate access to specific expertise that could improve a museum's program, i.e., improve marketing plan
- An achievement pot of money, bonusing system, would be a good idea

Museums in Northern British Columbia

Teleconference, June 15, 2005

Participants:
Louise Avery, Manager/Curator, Kitimat Museum
Tracy Calogheros, Executive Director, Exploration Place, Prince George
George Harris, Curator, Two Rivers Gallery
Diana French, Museum of the Cariboo
Ellen Corea, Director, Dawson Creek Art Gallery
Julie Fowler, Island Mountain Arts, Wells

I Program Objectives

- have found that there's not as much recognition on the part of the BCAC grants officer of the diversity of communities
- the interpretation of the objectives is the issue, not the objectives themselves; people in smaller communities feel disadvantaged compared to those who may be more able to meet professional standards
- committee needs to be sensitive to the differences between large and small institutions and communities
- the ways in which objectives are achieved are drastically different between different types of institutions
- organizations should define the community in which they are operating, so the committee has an understanding of the different needs
- competitive process: are smaller organizations competing directly with large organizations like the BRCM, the VAG or the AGGV? Programming can't be put on the same level
- programs that encourage education and lifelong learning are community-based
- the proportion of local people attending museums/galleries in small communities is very high compared to urban centres
- industrial history sites could be added, but they are huge black holes for capital expenses
- archival holdings are not fundable by the BCAC, but may be integral to community museums; funding to archives has been discontinued and no one picked it up; there's nowhere to apply to for archival work
- question of the need to have qualified staff in order to be able to apply; can't hire qualified staff without funding; chicken and egg
- relationship to First Nations projects, danger in trying to meeting a requirement to make the fit within BCAC; growing concern
- more formal consideration of professional museological standards is only relevant in a larger, urban context; standards would have to be modified for smaller, rural communities
- the site visits could play an important role, allow the museums to articulate how they are meeting standards
- museums that are 3-in-one facilities: museums, archives & galleries can't be expected to maintain the same standards as those in larger museums

- difficult to justify what we do as an arts organization; always trying to prove that we should exist within the province, although locally our value is well understood; if we were to shut our doors, it would be a huge loss to the community
- need to understand why kids' courses are offered as well as professional course
- question of how "professional" artists is defined
- arbitrary decision of importance of the number of hours/days that a museum/gallery is open
- think that the BCAC should look at its own mandate, and the relationship between this funding program and the mandate of the council
- museums/galleries can help the BCAC to meet its mandate in ways beyond the objectives
- cutting off outlying areas, putting them in competition with larger institutions that are not as well supported by their local communities is not serving the interested of the BCAC
- once an organization has been cut off by the BCAC, it's more difficult to access funding elsewhere
- should be better communication, more respect for local knowledge
- difficult to fit into current guidelines of the BCAC
- Rural/urban aspect is a big issue, can't lose touch with rural communities, BCAC needs to be aware of all different regional pursuits

II Application Process

- re: feedback; thought about doing an art exhibition of the feedback itself because of the inconsistency of the message being delivered; conflicting feedback from one year to the next
- a lot of museums find the financial reporting confusing and difficult; the numbers for the BCAC and the financial statements never seem to match up (e.g., gift shop); numbers have to be adjusted to fit, clients need to establish a standard and complete the application the same way year after year
- formal, consistent approach to site visits important; grants coordinators should travel the province to get to know the situations in the institutions themselves
- Site visits could be used to bring communities together as well
- there's very limited feedback, either in writing or even talking to the coordinator; feedback centres around the lack of funding
- uninformed negative reaction can be very disheartening, matter of pride to receive funding from the BCAC
- criticism that a gallery does too much community programming, not relevant to a small community gallery; they exist for their own local communities, but within a broader context
- grants coordinator should be an advocate for the museum/gallery, find out more about organizations in the province and speak on their behalf
- needs to be provision for both electronic and paper applications; there were problems with the online filing, at the BCAC end; it may not always be an ADSL issue, but a question of the computers being used themselves
- there are people just getting along in the places where they are throughout the province, the more coordinators can understand that context, the better it will be
- application process is time consuming but is worthwhile, used as a basis for other funding applications, and to set up annual plan

III Adjudication Process

- In adjudication for both museums and galleries, everyone is given equal weight (large and small institutions), and regionalism is not taken into account; regional distribution should be a criteria when adjudication occurs; it is important that support for arts, heritage, and culture is spread throughout the Province; that a small gallery in a rural area can be wiped out when up against the "big boys" is a real shame
- re: Advisory Committee needs to include people who come from both large and small institutions/communities, as important as whether they come from a visual arts or museum background; who participates is listed after the fact, but people don't know who's making the decisions in advance
- the purpose in theory of a blended committee bringing fresh points of view, ideas, and different takes on things to the process; danger in the aspect of neither side knowing and understanding the other's world, thereby possibly impacting on funding that could be awarded
- would be more likely to support public museums adjudicated by public museum reps, and visual arts organizations adjudicated by their reps, and never the two shall meet
- at times difficult – not knowing enough about the other community – during the process

IV Funding

- perception that amounts were/should be distributed regionally, with some degree of equity; some regions receive very little funding
- perception that it may be easier to cut funding to geographically distant organizations because the client is too far away to complain, or in such a small community that there's unlikely to be any media impact; coordinators don't seem to have any commitment to remote clients
- the funding program is based in an urban centre and comes from that context
- would like to see multiyear funding, but only if there's still an annual opportunity to ask for more; being locked in for x years increases stability but doesn't allow them to ask for more; special project funding should still be available to those receiving operating funding
- the question of what's capital and what's operating: small capital purchases, i.e., technological equipment, should be eligible under operating; for example, computers have been allowed under operating because they are required to operate, but other capital purchases that are also required to operate have been disallowed
- BCAC funding program needs to grow
- Money should be as unfettered as possible
- Anything that would strengthen program would be good
- Easier to raise capital funds locally than operating funding; difficult to operate on the strength of bingos, would like to see criteria expanded

Museums in the Lower Mainland

Thursday, June 16, 2005

Participants:
Connie Baxter, Supervisor, Museum & Heritage Services, City of Richmond
Roger Boulet, Heritage Services Assistant, Langley Centennial Museum
Ron Denman, Director, Chilliwack Museum & Historical Society
Maurice Guibord, Museum Programmer, Burnaby Village Museum
Robin Inglis, Director, North Vancouver Museum
Allison Mailer, Director of Operations, BC Sports Hall of Fame and Museum
Sue Morhun, Manager, Community and Heritage Services, Langley
Catherine Ouellet-Martin, Delta Museum & Archives
Anna Pappalardo, Assistant Director, Financial Resources, UBC Museum of Anthropology
Debbie Tardiff, Vancouver Maritime Museum Society

I Program Objectives

- relationship between BCAC objectives and the objective of this program
- lack of a heritage policy for the province
- argument has been made in the past that there should be a BC Heritage Council, parallel to the BCAC
- BCAC mandate is limited to arts, but should be more comprehensive including heritage and culture more broadly
- The program objectives are focussed on programming
- Should start at the top with a recognition that heritage and culture are a part of the mandate
- Hiving off of administration of program to BCMA suggests that the council is an arts council, not a heritage council, that heritage is a lower priority
- Fractured heritage community, number of organizations that museums need to deal with
- Would be more effective if museums could deal with one organization; heritage branch and BCAC don't appear to talk; museums budget should be transferred to Heritage Branch
- Because there is so little money, the BCAC can be very nit-picky in determining who is eligible for funding
- The fact that funding for new institutions has to come from an existing museum is a problem
- Criteria should be clearer, even people who have filled the program out for years can not describe the community objectives
- Program priorities expect museums to be all things to all people
- During evaluation a comment, i.e., "there doesn't seem to be any First Nations component here" can take legs and gain importance that is not warranted; flavour of the month importance given to issues
- Shotgun approach, trying to make sure all bases are covered
- Even by addressing issues raised the year before, museums can not increase funding; a different issue is identified that needs to be addressed
- The end result seems divorced from the work being done by museums
- These are said to be operating grants, but the evaluation is based upon programs/projects, it's not really core operating funding based upon broader questions of professional standards

- Disconnect between fact that it is an operating grant, and should remain an operating grant, but leans heavily towards programming
- Difficulties in working with First Nations (or any group) when the project is not a priority for the group; you can't force them to work with you
- Frustration that improvements within an organization are not recognized and rewarded
- Perception that BCAC doesn't understand issues within organizations
- Criteria appears to mean nothing
- New programs that have sprung up re: 2010, which have some impact on museums/galleries; question relationship between this program and provincial priorities
- If BCAC program is seen as reflecting and engaging in the past, it will receive no support, the future is 2010 at the moment
- How can an organization meet professional standards without any financial support?
- BCAC field is so diverse that it's difficult to compare the work of artists with that of institutions
- Question whether heritage tourism is really recognized as an economic driver in small communities
- Operation includes a number of other priorities beyond programming: is this institution being run professionally, is it meeting its mandate?
- The fact that there are so many museums grandfathered is a serious flaw; institutions offering the same level of service should get essentially the same amount of money; would like to see increases to other institutions to bring them up to that level
- Do the four grandfathered museums play a special role in the province: Forestry, Mining, Maritime, MOA/First Nations? Do they provide value for investment? Province could add others to that category, i.e., Sports
- Re: growing number of First Nations projects; huge impact for some institutions, expected to provide assistance to communities as well as do their own work within the institution; mentor, guide, teach; represent First Nations; question whether some of them really want museums, or something different, but they're just developing a museum to provide access to funding/repatriation
- Federal versus provincial politics enter into First Nations question; institutions are created largely with funding from the federal government, then are expected to compete with provincially funded institutions; similar scenario to former situation re: national exhibition centres, established by the federal government then downloaded to province/ local communities
- Each individual community establishes its own relationships with local First Nations communities; many conflicting organizations that don't necessarily get along, museum expected to be the objective party

II Application Process

- Amount of time required to complete the application
- Request for clarification from the BCAC resulted in completely different responses, inconsistency even within the organization
- Takes 2-3 weeks to complete, disproportionate amount of time compared to the funds received; it takes as long to re-write the financial statements as it does to complete the narrative
- Capital funding is not eligible, but organizations are asked to report on it – why?
- Why does program require a separate budget/financial reporting?; the financial aspect of this program is particularly burdensome

- No way of handling endowments in this application, they appear as surplus
- Value the directors' statement; a lot of the other stuff is quite repetitive
- List of every program that you've done – too much detail
- Comparison to a mortgage application; questions address the kernel of what is important
- Shouldn't have to repeat standard stuff, just changes
- How are you responding to your strategic plan? Improvements/changes
- Eliminate sections A-D
- The BCAC should have the benchmark info already on file
- Shouldn't be penalized for not providing information that was not requested in the first place
- For an operating grant, the annual report for the year before (including audited/reviewed financial statements), the workplan for the coming year, the directors' statement, and the budget should be enough
- The amount of time spent filling in the application, adjudicating it, and administering the program must be greater than the value of the dollars granted
- Mired in bureaucracy, baggage from performance arts programs still inherent in program
- Eligibility should related to professionalism of institution, not subject matter; this would include ~40+ museums and there needs to be more money to do that
- How can this be a closed group if the mandate is to tell the collective story of the history of BC?
- Major debate coming in terms of how many small museums there are and how many can be supported
- Quebec situation, 143 institutions receive operating funding; many institutions propped up by this money, but run on a volunteer basis
- Any little place can open a museum, but should they?
- This program should reward professionalism; should have to have at least one professional staff member
- BCAC the watchdog of museums in BC; is that its role?
- The role small museums play in the community is crucial
- Program could be tiered to address issues related to small, isolated communities
- Some smaller institutions can receive program grants
- Re: BCMA administration of program, BCMA has done a good job, but has had two good people administering program
- Process needs to be streamlined; should be as straightforward as the Heritage Branch
- Emphasis on programming may be related to the performing arts baggage that comes with the BCAC
- Should compare application forms from various provincial museum funders
- Great deal of talk about capacity building re: 2010; opportunity for a program to create that in the smaller institution
- New programs, i.e., 2010 funding doesn't reward operations
- Question of CARFAC rates: museums often display works of art but CARFAC rates are onerous/impossible to pay without additional funding allocated towards that purpose; museums criticized for not paying CARFAC rates; artists' fees have been part of visual arts organizations budgets for 20 years; the artists' fees should be negotiable, CARFAC not the only body that establishes rates; problem at the jury level results when one group of institutions is prepared to pay artists' fees and another not

- Feedback is provided on the program, but it is an operating grant
- Feedback seems to be random, what should we say this year?
- Remarks can be insulting; clarifications can be further insulting
- More concerned about whether staff has been cut in a core area: that's an operating issue; i.e., restructuring should be rewarded
- Potential of site visits – would be more beneficial than phone calls
- Relevance/accuracy of feedback very important

III Adjudication Process

- Mixed juries: useful to have a variety of people at the table, particularly in the case of community museums, where the issues overlap and they may include both history and art; serving on a jury is an exhausting experience; in general it can work well; challenges for people with different backgrounds, e.g., an artist may have trouble with community museums; any jury is dependent upon who they are, the chemistry between them, and who chooses them in the beginning; useful for the profession for everyone to have the opportunity to sit on juries; as long as the program is under the aegis of the BCAC, there should be a joint jury
- Each institution is a reflection of the community that it happens to be in; you can't compare a museum in Vancouver to a museum in Quesnel; each institution has to be able to clearly represent itself and what it does because that's what they are going to be evaluating on; federal applications do that more effectively
- Looking for standard of care; if you're eligible it's because you've met certain standards, the rest is quite subjective
- Jury doesn't have a lot of impact on the amount of funding an institution receives; there's been no real flexibility for the past 10 years; the result is essentially preordained, the process appears to be a sham
- Because it's an operating grant, not a project grant, jurors don't feel able to cut funding to an institution
- Feedback: "The jury noted…" should be more specific, praise should be recognized as praise and criticisms clear; even though the money may be limited praise or commendation from peers can go a long way to situate an organization with their peers or boards
- Demoralizing impact of cuts to BC Heritage; if the province isn't responsible for provincial heritage than who is?

Visual Arts Organizations in the Lower Mainland

June 16, 2005

Participants:

Christina Ritchie, Director, Contemporary Art Gallery
Corrine Corry, Director/Curator, Richmond Art Gallery
Chris Wootten, Associate Director, Vancouver Art Gallery
Hank Bull, Executive Director, Centre A, Vancouver International Centre for Contemporary Asian Art
Glenn Alteen, Executive Director, Grunt Gallery, Visible Art Society

I Program Objectives

- Confusion resulted from the posting of the Discussion Paper in January and the paper we submitted
- BCAC indicative of board/staff having different priorities; staff runs the board; question of succession planning within the BCAC, senior staff direct the program but there has not been enough renewal within the organization; existing staff have biases in terms of funding priorities that are independent of the program objectives
- BCAC charter is the basis of the issue: its mandate should be reviewed
- Lack of vision with regard to the visual arts in BC, and with the arts in general
- No recognition of change, either demographically within the city and province, or in terms of technology and the kinds of material being created and exhibited
- Arts community seen as a special interest group
- Should the BCAC fund cultural centres? No; community arts councils, local folkloric centres are something else
- BCAC should demonstrate that they are champions for the arts, be advocates on behalf of the organizations, for the principal for support for the arts through public funds; they are the interface between the politicians and the arts groups
- Their mission should be to change the pioneer backwoods political culture in BC
- BCAC staff overworked; board not perceived of as very powerful
- BCAC not really arms length
- CCA director appointed for a term position, not for life
- Re: standards; payment of artists fees important; basic professional standards
- Visual arts community should be working more effectively with BCAC staff and board to promote the role of the visual arts in BC
- Would like to see real criteria and objectives
- Let there be more consultation with the community
- Need to know that the BCAC will respond in good faith; question whether organization will respond effectively
- Not a reflection on the BCAC individuals themselves
- Redress the imbalance between the visual arts and the performing arts
- No recognition of the difference in mandate between performing arts and visual arts organizations, particularly artist-run centres

- Current discussion around Creative Cities about creative imagination, not about bums in seats; involvement of a small number of people can have a great impact
- Lack of understanding of the creative process; on the brink of a change within Vancouver, at the individual level, changing quickly, want the BCAC to be a part of this change

II Application Process

- Would like to see more transparency in terms of the process; impression that there's a little coven of guys administering the program and that the community is not a part of it
- Applications should be seen and read in their entirety
- The form is stupid, the same question different ways; the revision of financial statements for the BCAC takes several days to do
- BCAC should engage someone from the community to revise the form
- CCA interested in the quality of the ideas, the BCAC is more interested in the financials
- Details required on the form are disproportionate to the amount of money provided; needs to be shortened, less redundant
- First thing you do after the summer, once it's done, set for the CCA and the city application, questions don't seem to relate to organization's priorities
- Not clear why questions are being asked

III Adjudication Process

- lack of understanding of how the BCAC applications are adjudicated, the most opaque agency
- BCMA administering program inappropriate because it's a service organization evaluating its members
- Concern about museum people evaluating galleries, particularly artist-run centres, and not having the expertise; concern whether jury has the necessary expertise
- Artist-run centres are collecting institutions and a huge resource, the cutting edge of the museum of the future

IV Funding

- Monies of BC Gaming should be transferred to the BCAC to be administered
- BCAC needs to figure out a way to get more money: a new board, new structure, whatever is required
- Additional $3 million welcome, but BC arts lobby not satisfied and will continue to lobby for additional funding; Vancouver and Victoria-based arts organizations collaborated to develop campaign
- Visual arts lobby in Canada weak relative to performing arts and other disciplines
- Would like to see program moved to multiyear funding, 3-year funding would be beneficial, allow organizations to be more strategic
- Problems: that the BCAC has so little money and is not strategic with the money it has
- Arts Now capacity building funding, not project funding or operational funding, question of how they are building capacity towards the Olympics
- City and province have a way of funding the arts that is instrumental, a way of meeting particular objectives; the Canada Council funds according to artistic excellence, CCA rigorous jury forum, jury members very knowledgeable, institutions well known by jurors; at the provincial level the jury is not as rigorous

- The amount of funding provided in BC is significantly less than in other provinces
- Priorities of the BCAC need to be supported by additional funding being allocated to identified areas
- Decision-making isn't strategic; funding is not reallocated towards areas that are identified as priorities
- System grossly under-funded
- Vancouver Cultural Amenity Program is a minor allocation compared to the amount of money invested in Toronto through its Renaissance program
- Province and City of Toronto have cultivated private donors to participate fully
- Vancouver is very proud of itself as a city, but doesn't have a culture of supporting the arts, or major philanthropy; situation is improving at the private level but no leadership is coming from the province
- Arts funding is looked at as a form of welfare
- BCAC doesn't look at funding strategically, but in terms of giving a few dollars here and there

Museums and Visual Arts Organizations in the Interior

Kelowna, June 17, 2005

Participants:

Alice Windsor, Langham Cultural Centre, Kaslo
Tom Danyk, Manager, O'Keefe Ranch, Vernon
Wendy Lysak, Manager, Administrative Services, Kamloops Art Gallery
Deborah Proskow, Development Coordinator, Kelowna Art Gallery
Dona Moore, Director, Kelowna Art Gallery
Pamela Burns Resch, Vernon Art Gallery
Portia Priegert, Director, Okanagan Artists Alternative/Alternator Gallery, Kelowna
Wayne Wilson, Kelowna Museums
Randy Manuel, Penticton Museum
Shawn Lamb, Nelson Museum, Archives, Art Gallery & Historical Society
Paul Crawford, Director/Curator, Grand Forks Art Gallery
Robin McDonald, Gallery Vertigo, Vernon
Judith Jurica, Gallery Vertigo, Vernon
Wanda Mizner, Boundary Museum

I Program Objectives

- Historical distribution of funding
- Criteria generally useful
- Distribution of the funds doesn't seem to reflect the priorities and objectives or the organization, not strategically allocated
- Question how "provincial" the program objectives are
- Big guys down on the coast don't seem to get it, to understand that there isn't a population base to draw from
- Museums like the Doukabour Museum should be getting funded; who do you leave out? Whose history doesn't get told? Eminently disrespectful, should be inclusive rather than exclusive
- Don't see much money coming from BC Heritage for museums in the future
- Urban-centric approach, outdated, to view the province geographically rather than inclusively; criteria suggests that artistic/creative value in the province is resident in urban centres, not in smaller communities
- No recognition that the issues of a small city are different and need a voice
- Although First Nations issues are identified as a priority for the BCAC, not all communities have resident Indian bands that they can work with; it's not relevant in all situations
- Growing number of First Nations projects can be positive where relationship is worked out effectively, situation varies considerably from band to band, depending upon land settlement issue, wealth of the band, etc.
- Land settlement will have an impact on the pace and direction of cultural centres
- Close relationship to the local band can be helpful in terms of resources, expertise, etc., can add a very positive element; specific location by location situation
- Large, urban institutions need to be funded to a reasonable level as flagship institutions; they have the ability to lead the way on a different scale; these institutions should have a requirement

to provide leadership to smaller institutions throughout the province; e.g., RBCM should have the resources to support smaller museums, travelling exhibitions, loans, etc; no relationship between VAG and smaller galleries, cost & hassle prohibitive; if institutions are going to say they are the voice for the arts or heritage in BC they should follow through on that

- Payment of artists' fees:
  - designation of different gallery spaces for different types of exhibitions, with CARFAC fees being paid in some but not all situations; acceptance of the need to pay artists' fees, but not necessarily CARFAC fees; galleries negotiating directly with artists
  - a lot of people working in the field are visual artists; lack of appropriate fees, pension, benefits for staff; disproportionate respect for the artists compared to staff; summer students are sometimes paid more than permanent staff
  - the existence of a union doesn't necessarily reduce the amount of donated time given
- What is their real underlying criteria?
- Feeling that they're deliberately obscuring their real reason behind it
- Can an organization that is both a museum and a gallery apply to both programs without incorporating as two separate organizations?
- Museums are rooted in the present and the past, contemporary art galleries in the present and future, artist-run centres primarily future oriented
- More centres that don't have collections, but have their own set of issues
- Need to get their heads out of the lower mainland and fund institutions in places with populations under 15,000
- Needs to be some flexibility with the BCAC
- Increase the breadth of institutions that are eligible to apply; they all have just as much right to avail themselves of the funds; increase funding for BCAC employees to provide informative site visits

II Application Process

- Increasingly becoming the smaller of funding agencies, but requires the most effort
- Confusion among board members re: feedback received, how institution fits within BCAC priorities
- Introduction of a business model/approach and its impact on provincial funding, alternative revenue sources and how they are viewed by the BCAC
- Application form is particularly scary for new staff
- If there isn't the opportunity to increase funding, or the serious threat of a reduction in funding, why have such an onerous application and adjudication process
- Calculation of the value of the amount of time spent totals at least half the budget
- Financial statements required by the BCAC don't match those of the institution; while some parts of the application can be reused for other funders, could never send the BCAC budget to any other funder because it's not logical
- Seems to be a disrespect for the demonstrated ability and experience of those completing the applications, comments that come through in feedback are offensive
- Focus on the curatorial side, rather than the administrative side, reluctance to acknowledge that there are administrative costs to running an institution
- Being asked to act like a business but when organizations do so are taken to task
- Inconsistent messages being sent to different organizations

- Issue of sustainability not clearly defined
- Question of a contingency fund: has to be hidden somewhere
- Sense of competition difficult; the secrecy, the funding being frozen
- Per capita funding makes more sense
- Penalizing success
- For organizations whose fiscal year doesn't conform, there's a lag time between years
- BCAC asked one organization to change its year end
- Online application form doesn't work; a number of participants tried and abandoned it ("you could write it with a quill pen, in your own blood, faster")
- People new to their positions, in particular, would appreciate site visits, and advisory services
- The financial part of the application is unintelligible according to standard financial accounting practices, yet there are no guidelines comparable to those provided for the project description
- Instructions should be clearer
- Comparing apples and oranges; rules not being interpreted the same way by all participants
- Would be nice if all provincial accounting requirements could be standardized (e.g., Lotteries)
- Changes in staff, institutional memory, therefore not completed the same way year after year; some have developed formulas to interpret the financials
- There is not a budget for site visits, but they are seen as essential for the grants officer to understand the situation of each institution, particularly after major changes i.e., moves to new facilities, significant staff/board changes
- The application form is useful for other purposes, word counts should be enforced, rather than work edited; if applications are edited, they should be reviewed by the applicants before going to the Advisory Committee
- Offended by presumption that museum staff are not in touch with their communities
- Museums in regional centres are playing a leadership role in their districts, providing seminars and resources to smaller museums, no way to recognize that role on the current form
- Not the planning document that they'd choose to make, but it is used for that purpose because it has to be done
- Need to smarten up the financials because they don't make sense even to professional accountants

III Adjudication Process

- Role of the adjudication committee; if the staff hasn't visited, the committee's knowledge of individual institutions is critically important
- Grants officer should be everyone's advocate, provide the best, clearest information
- BCMA administration is considered to be effective
- Think the Advisory Committee should be divided into two; appreciate that there is cross-learning that goes on, and that it's a model that might have worked in the past, but museums and galleries are distinct enough that there should be a change; there's a critical mass of galleries now that there wasn't before and that should be recognized; museums have evolved significantly, yet the existing form doesn't recognize the reality of museums today
- If the Advisory Committee was divided into two, professional standards could be applied more readily, because the distinct aspects of their work would be recognized
- Should be judged by a jury of one's peers, people who understand the issues

- Possibly three juries: one museums, one art galleries, and one mixed mandate institutions
- BCAC needs to spend the time to develop a financial application that makes sense to the applicants as well as to the bureaucrats; need to involve professional accountants who work in museums/visual arts organizations in developing the application
- Many of the business challenges faced by museums/visual arts organizations, need to be understood by BCAC
- If funding is indeed frozen, do not pit organizations against each other; hold them to professional standards but don't pit one against the other
- If there is any opportunity to improve an organization give clear and appropriate feedback

IV Funding

- Issue of small towns/cities with large surrounding areas that do not contribute financially to culture in the community; two tiered service with one rate for citizens and one for people from the surrounding area
- Three quarters of the visual arts budget goes to two organizations
- If the funding is frozen, why bother applying every year; multiyear funding would be beneficial, provides some stability
- Insufficient funding has resulted in a lot of community museums not being able to apply; new museums continue to open in the province and really need funding, particularly those in very small communities where they don't have other sources of funding open to them
- Community museums are both museums and archives but there's no funding available for the archival function
- Re: multiyear funding: could be a disadvantage to new organizations, make it even more difficult for new organizations to participate in the program
- Rather than competing against each other, should all try to work together
- Not an equitable distribution of funds, the historical inequities need to be addressed
- If we're looking for sustainability in arts and cultural institutions, need to pay people appropriately
- Museums and visual arts organzations need to support the BCAC in its efforts to get increased funding from the province
- Operating costs that are beyond the control of institutions are going up (i.e., insurance) and the budget of the BCAC need to be increased to allow organizations to be properly funded
- Operating budget challenges the biggest issue; there are project funds available but its very difficult to access operating funds – this grant is essential; project applications can take a lot of time to complete without any return at all
- CMA lobbying on behalf of small city museums, an urgent and desperate situation
- "Cannibalistic" situation waiting for museums to die so others can absorb their funding
- Ultimately a society gets what it thinks is important, what it's willing to fight for
- Core funding
- Idea of a user-based fee: the government could allocate the GST from arts and cultural activities to benefit the nonprofit cultural activity in the province; demonstrate the relationship between the economic contribution of the arts and support that the arts receive

General Comments

- New ministry provincially: Sports, Tourism and Arts
- Recent CAMDO meeting stressed the need for organizations to become more politically active
- The Interior needs more representation on the BCAC council
- Would like to meet again as a community, and to have a follow up discussion after the report is submitted to decide whether or not the changes made as a result of the recommendations are useful
- BCMA conference being held in Kelowna this October, opportunity for the museums of the region to participate
- Onus should not be on institutions to pay their own way to regional meetings; BCAC people should go all the way to the institutions themselves